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# Life of

# Frances Power Cobbe.

## By Herself.

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With Illustrations.

ROYAL ASIAT

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL I.

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RICHARD BENTLEY & SON,
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# ERRATA.

VOL. I.

Page 249, line 5:
For "*wayward*" read "*wizard.*"

Page 258, 4 lines from bottom:
For "*Bryon*" read "*Byron.*"

VOL. II.

Page 82, line 18:
For "*Elliot*" read "*Eliot.*"

Page 119, 2 lines from bottom:
For "*astonished*" read "*astonish.*"

Page 160, line 16:
For "*Mottley*" read "*Motley.*"

Page 201, 5 lines from bottom:
For "*Mr. Bentley*" read "*Thackeray.*"

Page 209:
For "*Rev. J. J. May of Syracuse*" read
"*Rev. Samuel J. May of Syracuse, New York.*"

# PREFACE.

My life has been an interesting one to live and I hope that this record of it may not prove too dull to read. The days are past when biographers thought it necessary to apologize for the paucity of the adventures which they could recall and the obscurity of the achievements which their heroes might accomplish. We have gone far in the opposite direction, and are wont to relate *in extenso* details decidedly trivial, and to reproduce in imposing type correspondence which was scarcely worth the postage of the original manuscript. Our sense of the intrinsic interest of Humanity, as depicted either in biography or fiction,—that is, of the character of the *personages* of the drama going on upon our little stage,—has continually risen, while that of the *action* of the piece,—the "incidents" which our fathers chiefly regarded,—has fallen into the second plane. I fear I have been guilty in this book of recording many trifling memories and of reproducing some letters of little importance; but only through small touches could a happy childhood and youth be possibly depicted; and all the Letters have, I think, a certain value as relics and tokens of friendship, if not as expressions (as many of them are) of opinions carrying the weight of honoured names.

As regards these Letters (exclusively, of course, those of friends and correspondents now dead), I earnestly beg the heirs of the writers to pardon me if I have not asked their permission for the publication of them. To have ascertained, in the first place, who such representatives are and where they might be addressed, would, in many cases, have been a task presenting prohibitive difficulties; and as the contents of the Letters are wholly honourable to the heads and hearts of their authors, I may fairly hope that surviving relatives will be pleased that they should see the light, and will not grudge the testimony they bear to kindly sentiments entertained towards myself.*

There is in this book of mine a good deal of "*Old Woman's Gossip*," (I hope of a harmless sort), concerning many interesting men and women with whom it was my high privilege to associate freely twenty, thirty and forty years ago. But if it correspond at all to my design, it is not only, or chiefly, a collection of social sketches and friendly correspondence. I have tried to make it the true and complete history of a woman's existence *as seen from within;* a real LIFE, which he who reads may take as representing fairly the joys, sorrows and

* With regard to the six letters from Dean Stanley, I may mention that I offered nearly all of them to Mr. Theodore Waldron immediately on hearing that he was preparing to write the Dean's biography. He took copies of them and told me he should thankfully avail himself of them, but as they do not appear in the work published since his death, I feel at liberty to insert them here.

interests, the powers and limitations, of one of my sex and class in the era which is now drawing to a close. The world when I entered it was a very different place from the world I must shortly quit, most markedly so as regards the position in it of women and of persons like myself holding heterodox opinions, and my experience practically bridges the gulf which divides the English *ancien régime* from the new.

Whether my readers will think at the end of these volumes that such a Life as mine was worth *recording* I cannot foretell; but that it has been a "*Life worth Living*" I distinctly affirm; so well worth it, that,—though I entirely believe in a higher existence hereafter, both for myself and for those whose less happy lives on earth entitle them far more to expect it from eternal love and justice,—I would gladly accept the permission to run my earthly race once more from beginning to end, taking sunshine and shade just as they have flickered over the long vista of my seventy years. Even the retrospect of my life in these volumes has been a pleasure; a chewing of the cud of memories,—mostly sweet, none very bitter,—while I lie still a little while in the sunshine, ere the soon-closing night.

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# CHAPTER

# I.

## *FAMILY AND HOME.*

## CHAPTER I.

### Family and Home.

I have enjoyed through life the advantage of being, in the true sense of the words, "well born." My parents were good and wise; honourable and honoured; sound in body and in mind. From them I have inherited a physical frame which, however defective even to the verge of grotesqueness from the æsthetic point of view, has been, as regards health and energy, a source of endless enjoyment to me. From childhood till now in my old age—except during a few years interval of lameness from an accident,—mere natural existence has always been to me a positive pleasure. Exercise and rest, food and warmth, work, play and sleep, each in its turn has been delightful; and my spirits, though of course now no longer as gay as in youth, have kept a level of cheerfulness subject to no alternatives of depression save under the stress of actual sorrow. How much of the optimism which I am aware has coloured my philosophy ought to be laid to the account of this bodily *bien être*, it would be superfluous to enquire too nicely. At least I may fairly maintain that, as Health is the normal condition of existence, the views which a particularly healthy person takes of things are presumably more sound than those adopted by one habitually in the abnormal condition of an invalid.

As regards the inheritance of mental faculties, of which so much has been talked of late years, I cannot trace it in my own experience in any way. My father was a very able, energetic man; but his abilities all lay in the direction of administration, while those of my dear mother were of the order which made the charming hostess and cultivated

member of society with the now forgotten grace of the eighteenth century. Neither paternal nor maternal gifts or graces have descended to me; and such faculties as have fallen to my lot have been of a different kind; a kind which, I fear, my good father and his forbears would have regarded as incongruous and unseemly for a daughter of their house to exhibit. Sometimes I have pictured to myself the shock which "The old Master" would have felt could he have seen me—for example—trudging three times a week for seven years to an office in the purlieus of the Strand to write articles for a halfpenny newspaper. Not one of my ancestors, so far as I have heard, ever dabbled in printer's ink.

My brothers were all older than I; the eldest eleven, the youngest five years older; and my mother, when I was born, was in her forty-seventh year; a circumstance which perhaps makes it remarkable that the physical energy and high animal spirits of which I have just made mention came to me in so large a share. My old friend Harriet St. Leger, Fanny Kemble's "dear H. S.," who knew us all well, said to me one day laughing: "You know *you* are your Father's *Son!*" Had I been a man, and had possessed my brother's facilities for entering Parliament or any profession,* I have

* It is always amusing to me to read the complacent arguments of despisers of women when they think to prove the inevitable mental inferiority of my sex by specifying the smaller circumference of our heads. On this line of logic an elephant should be twice as wise as a man. But in my case, as it happens, their argument leans the wrong way, for my head is larger than those of most of my countrymen,—Doctors included. As measured carefully with proper instruments by a skilled phrenologist (the late Major Noel) the dimensions are as follows:—Circumference, 23⅜ inches; frontal lobe, 10 inches; greatest height from external orifice of ear to summit of crown, 6⅜ inches. On the other hand dear Mrs. Somerville's little head, which held three times as much as mine has ever done, was below the average of that of women. So much for that argument!

sometimes dreamed I could have made my mark and done some masculine service to my fellow-creatures. But the woman's destiny which God allotted to me has been, I do not question, the best and happiest for me; nor have I ever seriously wished it had been otherwise, albeit I have gone through life without that interest which has been styled "woman's whole existence." Perhaps if this book be found to have any value it will partly consist in the evidence it must afford of how pleasant and interesting, and withal, I hope, not altogether useless a life is open to a woman, though no man has ever desired to share it, nor has she seen the man she would have wished to ask her to do so. The days which many maidens my contemporaries and acquaintances,—

> "Lost in wooing
> In watching and pursuing,"—

(or in being pursued, which comes to the same thing); were spent by me, free from all such distractions, in study and in the performance of happy and healthful filial and housewifely duties. Destiny, too, was kind to me, likewise, by relieving me from care respecting the other great object of human anxiety,—to wit, Money. The prophet's prayer, "Give me neither poverty nor riches" was granted to me, and I have probably needed to spend altogether fewer thoughts on £ s. d. than could happen to anyone who has either to solve the problems "How to keep the Wolf from the door" and "How to make both ends meet?" or "How, justly and conscientiously, to expend a large income?" Wealth has only come to me in my old age, and now it is easy to know how to spend it. Thus it has happened that in early womanhood and middle life I enjoyed a degree of real *leisure* of mind possessed by few; and to it, I think, must be chiefly attributed anything which in my doings may have worn the

semblance of exceptional ability. I had good, sound working brains to start with, and much fewer hindrances than the majority of women in improving and employing them. *Voilà tout.*

I began by saying that I was well-born in the true sense of the words, being the child of parents morally good and physically sound. I reckon it also to have been an advantage,—though immeasurably a minor one,—to have been well-born, likewise, in the conventional sense. My ancestors, it is true, were rather like those of Sir Leicester Dedlock, "chiefly remarkable for never having done anything remarkable for so many generations."* But they were honourable specimens of county squires; and never, during the four centuries through which I have traced them, do they

* The aphorism so often applied to little girls, that "it is better to be good than pretty," may, with greater hope of success, be applied to family names; but I fear mine is neither imposing nor sonorous. I may say of it (as I remarked to the charming Teresa Doria when she ridiculed the Swiss for their *mesquin* names, all ending in "*in*"), "Everybody cannot have the luck to be able to sign themselves Doria *nata* Durazzo!" Nevertheless "Cobbe" is a very old name (Leuricus Cobbe held lands in Suffolk, *vide* Domesday), and it is curiously widespread as a word in most Aryan languages, signifying either the *head* (literal or metaphorical), or a head-shaped object. I am no philologist, and I dare say my examples offend against some "law," and therefore cannot be admitted; but it is at least odd that we should find Latin, "*Caput;*" Italian, *Capo;* Spanish, *Cabo;* Saxon, *Cop;* German, *Kopf.* Then we have, as derivates from the physical head, *Cape, Capstan, Cap, Cope, Copse* or *Coppice, Coping Stone, Copped, Cup, Cupola, Cub, Cubicle, Kobbold, Gobbo;* and from the metaphorical Head or Chief, *Captain, Capital, Capitation Capitulate,* &c. And again, we have a multitude of names for objects obviously signifying head-shaped, *e.g., Cob-horse, Cob-nut, Cob-gull, Cob-herring, Cob-swan, Cob-coal, Cob-iron, Cob-wall;* a *Cock* (of hay), according to Johnson, properly a "*Cop*" of hay; the *Cobb* (or Headland) at Lyme Regis, &c., &c.; the Kobbé fiord in Norway, &c.

seem to have been guilty of any action of which I need to be ashamed.

My mother's father was Captain Thomas Conway, of Morden Park, representative of a branch of that family. Her only brother was Adjutant-General Conway, whose name Lord Roberts has kindly informed me is still, after fifty years, an "honoured word in Madras." My father's progenitors were, from the fifteenth century, for many generations owners of Swarraton, now Lord Ashburton's beautiful "Grange" in Hampshire; the scene of poor Mrs. Carlyle's mortifications. While at Swarraton the heads of the family married, in their later generations, the daughters of Welborne of Allington; of Sir John Owen; of Sir Richard Norton of Rotherfield (whose wife was the daughter of Bishop Bilson, one of the translators of the Bible); and of James Chaloner, Governor of the Isle of Man, one of the Judges of Charles I. The wife of this last remarkable man was Ursula Fairfax, niece of Lord Fairfax.*

On one occasion only do the Cobbes of Swarraton seem to have transcended the "Dedlock" programme. Richard Cobbe was Knight of the Shire for Hants in Cromwell's short Parliament of 1656, with Richard Cromwell for a colleague. What he did therein History saith not! The grandson of this Richard Cobbe, a younger son named Charles, went to Ireland in 1717 as Chaplain to the Duke of Bolton with whom he was connected through the Norton's; and a few years later he was appointed Archbishop of Dublin, —a post which he held with great honour until his death in 1765. On every occasion when penal laws against Catholics were proposed in the Irish House of Lords Archbishop Cobbe

* As such things as mythical pedigrees are not *altogether* unknown in the world, I beg to say that I have myself noted the above from Harleian MS. in British Museum 1473 and 1139. Also in the College of Arms, G. 16, p. 74, and C. 19, p. 104.

contended vigorously against them, dividing the House again and again on the Bills; and his numerous letters and papers in the Irish State-Paper office (as Mr. Froude has assured me after inspection) bear high testimony to his liberality and integrity in that age of corruption. Two traditions concerning him have a certain degree of general interest. One, that John Wesley called upon him at his country house,—my old home, Newbridge;—and that the interview was perfectly friendly; Wesley approving himself and his work to the Archbishop's mind. The other is; that when Handel came to Dublin, bringing with him the MS. of the *Messiah*, of which he could not succeed in obtaining the production in London, Archbishop Cobbe, then Bishop of Kildare, took lively interest in the work, and under his patronage, as well as that of several Irishmen of rank, the great Oratorio was produced in Dublin.

Good Archbishop Cobbe had not neglected the affairs of his own household. He bought considerable estates in Louth, Carlow, and Co. Dublin, and on the latter, about twelve miles north of Dublin and two miles from the pretty rocky coast of Portrane, he built his country-house of Newbridge, which has ever since been the home of our family. As half my life is connected with this dear old place, I hope the reader will look at the pictures of it which must be inserted in this book and think of it as it was in my youth, bright and smiling and yet dignified; bosomed among its old trees and with the green, wide-spreading park opened out before the noble granite *perron* of the hall door. There is another country-house on the adjoining estate, Turvey, the property of Lord Trimleston, and I have often amused myself by comparing the two. Turvey is really a *wicked-looking* house, with half-moon windows which suggest leering eyes, and partition walls so thick that secret passages run through them; and bedrooms with tapestry and *ruelles* and hidden

doors in the wainscot. There were there, also, when I was young, certain very objectionable pictures, beside several portraits of the "beauties" of Charles II.'s court, (to the last degree *decolletées*) who had been, no doubt, friends of the first master of the house, their contemporary. In the garden was a grotto with a deep cold bath in it, which, in the climate of Ireland, suggested suicide rather than ablution. Altogether the place had the same suggestiveness of "deeds of darkness" which I remember feeling profoundly when I went over Holyrood with Dr. John Brown; and it was quite natural to attach to Turvey one of the worst of the traditional Irish curses. This curse was pronounced by the Abbess of the neighbouring convent (long in ruins) of Grace-Dieu when Lord Kingsland, then lord of Turvey, had by some nefarious means induced the English Government of the day to make over the lands of the convent to himself. On announcing this intelligence in his own hall to the assembled nuns, the poor ladies took refuge very naturally in malediction, went down simultaneously on their knees, and repeated after their Abbess a denunciation of Heaven's vengeance on the traitor. "There should never want an idiot or a law-suit in the family; and the rightful heir should never see the smoke of the chimney." Needless to add, law-suits and idiots have been plentiful ever since, and, after several generations of absentees, Turvey stands in a treeless desert, and has descended in the world from lordly to humble owners.

How different was Newbridge! Built not by a dissolute courtier of Charles II., but by the sensible Whig, and eminently Protestant Archbishop, it has as open and honest a countenance as its neighbour has the reverse. The solid walls, about three feet and a-half thick in most parts, keep out the cold, but neither darken the large, lofty rooms, nor afford space for devious and secret passages. The house

stands broadly-built and strong, not high or frowning; its Portland-stone colour warm against the green of Irish woods and grass. Within doors every room is airy and lightsome, and more than one is beautiful. There is a fine staircase out of the second hall, the walls of which are covered with old family pictures which the Archbishop had obtained from his elder brother, Col. Richard Chaloner Cobbe, who had somehow lost Swarraton, and whose line ended in an heiress, wife of the 11th Earl of Huntingdon. A long corridor downstairs was, I have heard, formerly hung from end to end with arms intended for defence in case of attack. When the Rebellion of 1798 took place the weapons were hidden in a hole into which I have peered, under the floor of a room off the great drawing-room, but what became of them afterwards I do not know. My father possessed only a few pairs of handsome pistols, two or three blunderbusses, sundry guns of various kinds, and his own regimental sword which he had used at Assaye. All these hung in his study. The drawing-room with its noble proportions and its fifty-three pictures by Vandyke, Ruysdael, Guercino, Vanderveldt and other old masters, was the glory of the house. In it the happiest hours of my life were passed.

Of this house and of the various estates bought and leased by the Archbishop his only surviving son, Thomas Cobbe, my great-grandfather, came into possession in the year 1765. Irreverently known to his posterity as "Old Tommy" this gentleman after the fashion of his contemporaries muddled away in keeping open house a good deal of the property, and eventually sold one estate and (what was worse) his father's fine library. *Per contra* he made the remarkable collection of pictures of which I have spoken as adorning the walls of Newbridge. Pilkington, the author of the *Dictionary of Painters*, was incumbent of the little Vicarage of Donabate, and naturally somewhat in the relation of chaplain to the

squire of Newbridge, who had the good sense to send him to Holland and Italy to buy the above-mentioned pictures, many of which are described in the *Dictionary*. Some time previously, when Pilkington had come out as an Art-critic, the Archbishop had remonstrated with him on his unclerical pursuit; but the poor man disarmed episcopal censure by replying, "Your Grace, I have preached for a dozen years to an old woman who *can't* hear, and to a young woman who *won't* hear; and now I think I may attend to other things!"

Thomas Cobbe's wife's name has been often before the public in connection with the story, told by Crabbe, Walter Scott and many others, of the lady who wore a black ribbon on her wrist to conceal the marks of a ghost's fingers. The real ghost-seer in question, Lady Beresford, was confounded by many with her granddaughter Lady Eliza Beresford, or, as she was commonly called after her marriage, Lady Betty Cobbe. How the confusion came about I do not know, but Lady Betty, who was a spirited woman much renowned in the palmy days of Bath, was very indignant when asked any questions on the subject. Once she received a letter from one of Queen Charlotte's Ladies-in-Waiting begging her to tell the Queen the true story. Lady Betty in reply "presented her compliments but was sure the Queen of England would not pry into the private affairs of her subjects, and had *no intention of gratifying the impertinent curiosity of a Lady-in-Waiting!*" Considerable labour was expended some years ago by the late Primate (Marcus Beresford) of Ireland, another descendant of the ghost-seer in identifying the real personages and dates of this curious tradition. The story which came to me directly through my great-aunt, Hon. Mrs. Henry Pelham, Lady Betty's favourite daughter, was, that the ghost was John Le Poer, Second Earl of Tyrone; and the ghost-seer was his cousin, Nichola Hamilton, daughter of Lord Glerawly, wife of Sir Tristram Beresford. The

cousins had promised each other to appear,—whichever of them first departed this life,—to the survivor. Lady Beresford, who did not know that Lord Tyrone was dead, awoke one night and found him sitting by her bedside. He gave her (so goes the story) a short, but, under the circumstances, no doubt impressive lesson, in the elements of orthodox theology; and then to satisfy her of the reality of his presence, which she persisted in doubting, he twisted the curtains of her bed through a ring in the ceiling, placed his hand on a wardrobe and left on it the ominous mark of five burning fingers (the late Hon. and Rev. Edward Taylor of Ardgillan Castle told me he had seen this wardrobe!) and finally touched her wrist, which shrunk incontinently and never recovered its natural hue. Before he vanished the Ghost told Lady Beresford that her son should marry his brother's daughter and heiress; and that she herself should die at the birth of a child after a second marriage, in her forty-second year. All these prophecies, of course, came to pass. From the marriage of Sir Marcus Beresford with the ghost's niece, Catharine, Baroness Le Poer of Curraghmore, has descended the whole clan of Irish Beresfords. He was created Earl of Tyrone; his eldest son was the first Marquis of Waterford; another son was Archbishop of Tuam, created Lord Decies; and his fifth daughter was the Lady Betty Cobbe, my great-grandmother, concerning whom I have told this old story. In these days of Psychological Research I could not take on myself to omit it, though my own private impression is, that Lady Beresford accidentally gave her wrist a severe blow against her bedstead while she was asleep; and that, by a law of dreaming which I have endeavoured to trace in my essay on the subject, her mind instantly created the *myth* of Lord Tyrone's apparition. Allowing for a fair amount of subsequent agglomeration of incidents and wonders in the tradition, this hypothesis, I think

quite meets the exigencies of the case; and in obedience to the law of Parsimony, we need not run to a preternatural explanation of the Black Ribbon on the Wrist, no doubt the actual nucleus of the tale.

I do not *dis*believe in ghosts; but unfortunately I have never been able comfortably to believe in any particular ghost-story. The overwhelming argument against the veracity of the majority of such narrations is, that they contradict the great truth beautifully set forth by Southey—

> "They sin who tell us Love can die!—
> With life all other passions fly
> All others are but vanity—
> In Heaven, Ambition cannot dwell,
> Nor Avarice in the vaults of hell.
> Earthly these passions as of earth,
> They perish where they had their birth—
> But Love is indestructible. . . ."

The ghost of popular belief almost invariably exhibits the survival of Avarice, Revenge, or some other thoroughly earthly passion, while for the sake of the purest, noblest, tenderest Love scarcely ever has a single Spirit of the departed been even supposed to return to comfort the heart which death has left desolate. The famous story of Miss Lee is one exception to this rule, and so is another tale which I found recorded in an MS. Memorandum in the writing of my uncle the Rev. Henry Cobbe, Rector of Templeton (*died* 1823).

"Lady Moira* was at one time extremely uneasy about her sister, Lady Selina Hastings, from whom she had not heard for a considerable time. One night she dreamed that her sister came to her, sat down by her bedside, and said to her, 'My dear sister, I am dying of fever. They will not tell you of it because of your situation' (she was then with child),

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Wife of Thomas Cobbe's half-brother.

'but I shall die, and the account will be brought to your husband by letter directed like a foreign one in a foreign hand.'. She told her dream to her attendant, Mrs. Moth, as soon as she awoke, was extremely unhappy for letters, till at length, the day after, there arrived one, directed as she had been told, which contained an account of her sister's death. It had been written by her brother, Lord Huntingdon, and in a feigned hand, lest she should ask to know the contents.

"She had many other extraordinary dreams, and it is very remarkable that after the death of her attendant, Moth, who had educated her and her children, and was the niece of the famous Bishop Hough, that she (Moth) generally took a part in them, particularly if they related to any loss in her family. Indeed, I believe she never dreamed of her except when she was to undergo a loss. Lady Granard told me an instance of this: Her second son Colonel Rawdon died very suddenly. He had not been on good terms with Lady Moira for some time. One night she dreamed that Moth came into the room, and upon her asking her what she wanted she said, 'My lady, I am come to bring the Colonel to you.' Then he entered, came near her, and coming within the curtains, sat on the bed and said, 'My dearest mother, I am going a very long journey, and I cannot bear to go without the assurance of your forgiveness.' Then she threw her arms about his neck and said, 'Dear Son, can you doubt my forgiving you? But where are you going?' He replied, 'A long journey, but I am happy now that I have seen you.' The next day she received an account of his death.

"About a fortnight before her death, when Lady Granard and Lady Charlotte Rawdon, her daughters, were sitting up in her room, she awoke suddenly, very ill and very much agitated, saying that she had dreamed that Mrs. Moth came

into her room. When she saw her she was so full of the idea that evils always attended her appearance that she said, 'Ah, Moth, I fear you are come for my Selina' (Lady G.). Moth replied, 'No, my Lady, but I am come for Mr. John.' They gave her composing drops and soothed her; she soon fell asleep, and from that time never mentioned her son's name nor made any inquiry about him; but he died on the very day of her dream, though she never knew it."

Old Thomas Cobbe and after him his only son, Charles Cobbe, represented the (exceedingly-rotten) Borough of Swords for a great many years in the Irish Parliament, which was then in its glory, resonant with the eloquence of Flood (who had married Lady Betty's sister, Lady Jane) and of Henry Grattan. On searching the archives of Dublin, however, in the hope of discovering that our great-grandfather had done some public good in his time, my brother and I had the mortification to find that on the only occasion when reference was made to his name, it was in connection with charges of bribery and corruption! On the other hand, it is recorded to his honour that he was almost the only one among the Members of the Irish Parliament who voted for the Union, and yet refused either a peerage or money compensation for his seat. Instead of these he obtained for Swords some educational endowments by which I believe the little town still profits. In the record of corruption sent by Lord Randolph Churchill to the *Times* (May 29th, 1893), in which appears a charge of interested motives against nearly every Member of the Irish Parliament of 1784, "Mr. Cobbe" stands honourably alone as without any "object" whatever.

Thomas Cobbe's two daughters, my great-aunts and immediate predecessors as the Misses Cobbe, of Newbridge, (my grandfather having only sons) differed considerably in all respects from their unworthy niece. They occupied, so said tradition, the large cheerful room which afterwards

became my nursery. A beam across the ceiling still bore, in my time, a large iron staple firmly fixed in the centre from whence had dangled a hand-swing. On this swing my great-aunts were wont to hang by their arms, to enable their maids to lace their stays to greater advantage. One of them, afterwards the Hon. Mrs. Henry Pelham, Lady-in-Waiting to Queen Caroline, likewise wore the high-heeled shoes of the period; and when she was an aged woman she showed her horribly deformed feet to one of my brothers, and remarked to him: "See, Tom, what comes of high-heeled shoes!" I am afraid many of the girls now wearing similarly monstrous foot-gear will learn the same lesson too late. Mrs. Pelham, I have heard, was the person who practically brought the house about the ears of the unfortunate Queen Caroline; being the first to throw up her appointment at Court when she became aware of the Queen's private on-goings. Her own character stood high; and the fact that she would no longer serve the Queen naturally called attention to all the circumstances. Bad as Queen Caroline was, George the Fourth was assuredly worse than she. In his old age he was personally very disgusting. My mother told me that when she received his kiss on presentation at his Drawing Room, the contact with his face was sickening, like that with a corpse. I still possess the dress she wore on that occasion.

Mrs. Pelham's sister married Sir Henry Tuite, of Sonnagh, and for many years of her widowhood lived in the Circus, Bath, and perhaps may still be remembered there by a few as driving about her own team of four horses in her curricle, in days when such doings by ladies were more rare than they are now.

The only brother of these two Miss Cobbes of the past, Charles Cobbe, of Newbridge, M.P., married Anne Power Trench, of Garbally, sister of the first Earl of Clancarty.

The multitudinous clans of Trenches and Moncks, in addition to Lady Betty's Beresford relations, of course thenceforth adopted the habit of paying visitations at Newbridge. Arriving by coachloads, with trains of servants, they remained for months at a time. A pack of hounds was kept, and the whole *train de vie* was liberal in the extreme. Naturally, after a certain number of years of this kind of thing, embarrassments beset the family finances; but fortunately at the crisis Lady Betty came under the influence of her husband's cousin, the Methodist Countess of Huntingdon, and ere long renounced the vanities and pleasures of the world, and persuaded her husband to retire with her and live quietly at Bath, where they died and were buried in Weston churchyard. Fifty years afterwards I found in the library at Newbridge the little batch of books which had belonged to my great-grandmother in this phase of her life, and were marked by her pencil: *Jacob Boehmen* and the *Life of Madame Guyon* being those which I now recall. The peculiar, ecstatic pietism which these books breathe, differing *toto cœlo* from the "other worldliness" of the divines of about 1810, with whose works the "Good-book Rows" of our library were replenished, impressed me very vividly.*

I have often tried to construct in my mind some sort of picture of the society which existed in Ireland a hundred years ago, and moved in those old rooms wherein the first half of my life was spent, but I have found it a very baffling

* Lady Huntingdon was doubly connected with Thomas Cobbe. She was his first cousin, daughter of his maternal aunt Selina Countess of Ferrers, and mother of his sister-in-law, Elizabeth Countess of Moira. The pictures of Dorothy Levinge, and of her father; of Lady Ferrers; and of Lord Moira and his wife, all of which hang in the halls at Newbridge, made me as a child, think of them as familiar people. Unfortunately the portrait of chief interest, that of Lady Huntingdon, is missing in the series.

undertaking. Apparently it combined a considerable amount of æsthetic taste with traits of genuine barbarism; and high religious pretension with a disregard of everyday duties and a *penchant* for gambling and drinking which would now place the most avowedly worldly persons under a cloud of opprobrium. Card-playing was carried on incessantly. Tradition says that the tables were laid for it on rainy days at 10 o'clock in the morning in Newbridge drawing-room; and on every day in the interminable evenings which followed the then fashionable four o'clock dinner. My grandmother was so excellent a whist-player that to extreme old age in Bath she habitually made a small, but appreciable, addition to her income out of her "card purse"; an ornamental appendage of the toilet then, and even in my time, in universal use. I was given one as a birthday present in my tenth year. She was greatly respected by all, and beloved by her five sons; every one of whom, however, she had sent out to be nursed at a cottage in the park till they were three years old. Her motherly duties were supposed to be amply fulfilled by occasionally stopping her carriage to see how the children were getting on.

As to the drinking among the men, (the women seem not to have shared the vice) it must have prevailed to a disgusting extent upstairs and downstairs. A fuddled condition after dinner was accepted as the normal one of a gentleman, and entailed no sort of disgrace. On the contrary, my father has told me that in his youth his own extreme sobriety gave constant offence to his grandfather, and to his comrades in the army; and only by showing the latter that he would sooner fight than be bullied to drink to excess could he obtain peace. Unhappily, poor man! while his grandfather, who seldom went to bed quite sober for forty years, lived to the fine old age of 82, enjoying good health to the last, his temperate grandson inherited the gout and in

his latter years was a martyr thereto. Among the exceedingly beautiful old Indian and old Worcester china which belonged to Thomas Cobbe and showed his good taste and also the splendid scale of his entertainments (one dessert-service for 36 persons was magnificent) there stands a large goblet calculated to hold *three bottles* of wine. This glass (tradition avers) used to be filled with claret, seven guineas were placed at the bottom, and he who drank it pocketed the coin.

The behaviour of these Anglo-Irish gentry of the last century to their tenants and dependants seems to have proceeded on the truly Irish principle of being generous before you are just. The poor people lived in miserable hovels which nobody dreamed of repairing; but then they were welcome to come and eat and drink at the great house on every excuse or without any excuse at all. This state of things was so perfectly in harmony with Celtic ideas that the days when it prevailed are still sighed after as the "good old times." Of course there was a great deal of Lady Bountiful business, and also of medical charity-work going forward. Archbishop Cobbe was fully impressed with the merits of the Tar-water so marvellously set forth by his suffragan, Bishop Berkeley, and I have seen in his handwriting in a book of his wife's cookery receipts, a receipt for making it, beginning with the formidable item: "Take six gallons of the best French brandy." Lady Betty was a famous compounder of simples, and of things that were not simple, and a "Chilblain Plaister" which bore her name, was not many years ago still to be procured in the chemists' shops in Bath. I fear her prescriptions were not always of so unambitious a kind as this. One day she stopped a man on the road and asked his name—"Ah, then, my lady," was the reply, "don't you remember me? Why, I am the husband of the woman your ladyship gave the medicine to *and she died the next day. Long life to your Ladyship!*"

As I have said, the open-housekeeping at Newbridge at last came to an end, and the family migrated to No. 9 and No. 22, Marlborough Buildings, Bath, where two generations spent their latter years, died, and were buried in Weston churchyard, where I have lately restored their tomb-stones.

My grandfather died long before his father, and my father, another Charles Cobbe, found himself at eighteen pretty well his own master, the eldest of five brothers. He had been educated at Winchester, where his ancestors for eleven generations went to school in the old days of Swarraton; and to the end of his life he was wont to recite lines of Anacreon learned therein. But his tastes were active rather than studious, and disliking the idea of hanging about his mother's house till his grandfather's death should put him in possession of Newbridge, he listened with an enchanted ear to a glowing account which somebody gave him of India, where the Mahratta wars were just beginning.

Without much reflection or delay, he obtained a cornet's commission in the 19th Light Dragoons and sailed for Madras. Very shortly he was engaged in active service under Wellesley, who always treated him with special kindness as another Anglo-Irish gentleman. He fought at many minor battles and sieges, and also at Assaye and Argaum; receiving his medal for these two, just fifty years afterwards. I shall write of this again a little further on in this book.

At last he fell ill of the fever of the country, which in those days was called "ague," and was left in a remote place absolutely helpless. He was lying in bed one day in his tent when a Hindoo came in and addressed him very courteously, asking after his health. My father incautiously replied that he was quite prostrated by the fever. "What! Not able to move at all, not to walk a step?" said his visitor. "No! I cannot stir," said my father. "Oh, in that case, then," said the man,—and without more ado he seized my father's desk,

in which was all his money and valuables, and straightway made off with it before my father could summon his servants. His condition, thus left alone in an enemy's country without money, was bad enough, but he managed to send a trusty messenger to Sir Arthur Wellesley, who promptly lent him all he required.

Finding that there was no chance of his health being sufficiently restored in India to permit of further active service, and the Mahratta wars being practically concluded, my father sold his commission of Lieutenant and returned to England, quietly letting himself into his mother's house in Bath on his return by the latch-key, which he had carried with him through all his journeys. All his life long the impress made both on his outward bearing and character by those five years of war were very visible. He was a fine soldier-like figure, six feet high, and had ridden eighteen stone in his full equipment. His face was, I suppose, ugly, but it was very intelligent, very strong willed, and very unmistakeably that of a gentleman. He was under-jawed, very pale, with a large nose, and small, grey, very lively eyes; but he had a beautiful white forehead from which his hair, even in old age, grew handsomely, and his head was very well set on his broad shoulders. The photograph on a later page represents him at 76. He rode admirably, and a better figure on horseback could not be seen. At all times there was an aspect of strength and command about him, which his vigorous will and (truth compels me to add) his not seldom fiery temper, fully sustained. On the many occasions when we had dinner parties at Newbridge, he was a charming, gay and courteous host; and I remember being struck, when he once wore a court dress and took me with him to pay his respects to a Tory Lord Lieutenant, by the contrast which his figure and bearing presented to that of nearly all

the other men in similar attire. *They* looked as if they were masquerading, and he as if the lace-ruffles and plum coat and sword were his habitual dress. He had beautiful hands, of extraordinary strength.

One day he was walking with one of his lady cousins on his arm in the street. A certain famous prize-fighting bully, the Sayers or Heenan of the period, came up hustling and elbowing every passenger off the pavement. When my father saw him approach he made his cousin take his left arm, and as the prize-fighter prepared to shoulder him, he delivered with his right fist, without raising it, a blow which sent the ruffian fainting into the arms of his companions. Having deposited his cousin in a shop, my father went back for the sequel of the adventure, and was told that the "Chicken" (or whatever he was called) had had his ribs broken.

After his return from India, my father soon sought a wife. He flirted sadly, I fear, with his beautiful cousin, Louisa Beresford, the daughter of his great-uncle, the Archbishop of Tuam; and one of the ways in which he endeavoured to ingratiate himself was to carry about at all times a provision of bon-bons and barley-sugar with which to ply the venerable and sweet-toothed prelate; who was generally known as "The Beauty of Holiness." How the wooing would have prospered cannot be told, but before it had reached a crisis a far richer lover appeared on the scene—Mr. Hope. "Anastasius Hope," as he was called from the work of which he was the author, was immensely wealthy, and a man of great taste in art, but he had the misfortune to be so excessively ugly that a painter whom he offended by not buying his picture, depicted him and Miss Beresford as "Beauty and the Beast," and exhibited his painting at the Bath Pump-room, where her brother, John Beresford (afterwards the second Lord Decies) cut it deliberately

to pieces. An engagement between Mr. Hope and Miss Beresford was announced not long after the arrival of Mr. Hope in Bath; and my mother, then Miss Conway, going to pay a visit of congratulation to Miss Beresford, found her reclining on a blue silk sofa appropriately perusing *The Pleasures of Hope*. After the death of Mr. Hope (by whom she was the mother of Mr. Beresford Hope, Mr. Adrian and Mr. Henry Hope), Mrs. Hope married the illegitimate son of her uncle, the Marquis of Waterford—Field Marshal Lord Beresford—a fine old veteran, with whom she long lived happily in the corner house in Cavendish Square, where my father and brothers always found a warm welcome.

At length, after some delays, my father had the great good fortune to induce my dear mother to become his wife, and they were married at Bath, March 13th, 1809. Frances Conway was, as I have said, daughter of Capt. Thomas Conway, of Morden Park. Her father and mother both died whilst she was young and she was sent to the famous school of Mrs. Devis, in Queen Square, Bloomsbury, of which I shall have something presently to say, and afterwards lived with her grandmother, who at her death bequeathed to her a handsome legacy, at Southampton. When her grandmother died, she being then sixteen years of age, received an invitation from Colonel and Mrs. Champion to live with them and become their adopted daughter. The history of this invitation is rather touching. Mrs. Champion's parents had, many years before, suffered great reverses, and my mother's grandfather had done much to help them, and, in particular, had furnished means for Mrs. Champion to go out to India. She returned after twenty years as the childless wife of the rich and kindly old Colonel, the friend of Warren Hastings, who having been commander-in-chief of the Forces of

the East India Company had had a good "shake of the Pagoda tree." She repaid to the grandchild the kindness done by the grandfather; and was henceforth really a mother to my mother, who dearly loved both her and Col. Champion. In their beautiful house, No. 29, Royal Crescent, she saw all the society of Bath in its palmiest days, Mrs. Champion's Wednesday evening parties being among the most important in the place. My mother's part as daughter of the house was an agreeable one, and her social talents and accomplishments fitted her perfectly for the part. The gentle gaiety, the sweet dignity and ease of her manners and conversation remain to me as the memory of something exquisite, far different even from the best manner and talk of my own or the present generation; and I know that the same impression was always made on her visitors in her old age. I can compare it to nothing but the delicate odour of the dried rose leaves with which her china vases were filled and her wardrobes perfumed.

I hardly know whether my mother were really beautiful, though many of the friends who remembered her in early womanhood spoke of her as being so. To me her face was always the loveliest in the world; indeed it was the one through which my first dawning perception of beauty was awakened. I can remember looking at her as I lay beside her on the sofa, where many of her suffering hours were spent, and suddenly saying, "Mamma you are so pretty!" She laughed and kissed me, saying, "I am glad you think so my child;" but that moment really brought the revelation to me of that wonderful thing in God's creation, the *Beautiful!* She had fine features, a particularly delicate, rather thin lipped mouth; magnificent chestnut hair, which remained scarcely changed in colour or quantity till her death at seventy years of age; and the clear, pale complexion and hazel eyes which belong to such hair. She

always dressed very well and carefully. I never remember seeing her downstairs except in some rich dark silk, and with a good deal of fine lace about her cap and old-fashioned *fichu*. Her voice and low laughter were singularly sweet, and she possessed both in speaking and writing a full and varied diction which in later years she carefully endeavoured to make me share, instead of satisfying myself, in school-girl fashion, with making one word serve a dozen purposes. She was an almost omnivorous reader; and, according to the standard of female education in her generation, highly cultivated in every way; a good musician with a very sweet touch of the piano, and speaking French perfectly well.

Immediately after their marriage my parents took possession of Newbridge, and my father began earnestly the fulfilment of all the duties of a country gentleman, landlord and magistrate. My mother, indeed, used laughingly to aver that he "went to jail on their wedding day," for he stopped at Bristol on the road and visited a new prison with a view to introducing improvements into Irish jails. It was due principally to his exertions that the county jail, the now celebrated Kilmainham, was afterwards erected.

Newbridge having been deserted for nearly thirty years, the woods had been sorely injured and the house and out-buildings dilapidated, but with my father's energy and my mother's money things were put straight; and from that time till his death in 1857 my father lived and worked among his people.

Though often hard pressed to carry out with a very moderate income all his projects of improvements, he was never in debt. One by one he rebuilt or re-roofed almost every cottage on his estate, making what had been little better than pig-styes, fit for human habitation; and when he found that his annual rents could never suffice to do all that was required in this way for his tenants in his mountain

property, he induced my eldest brother, then just of age, to join with him in selling two of the pictures which were the heirlooms of the family and the pride of the house, a Gaspar Poussin and a Hobbema, which last now adorns the walls of Dorchester House. I remember as a child seeing the tears in his eyes as this beautiful painting was taken out of the room in which it had been like a perpetual ray of sunshine. But the sacrifice was completed, and 80 good stone and slate "Hobbema Cottages," as we called them, soon rose all over Glenasmoil. Be it noted by those who deny every merit in an Anglo-Irish landlord, that not a farthing was added to the rent of the tenants who profited by this real act of self-denial.

All this however refers to later years. I have now reached to the period when I may introduce myself on the scene. Before doing so, however, I am tempted to print here a letter which my much valued friend, Miss Felicia Skene, of Oxford, has written to me on learning that I am preparing this autobiography. She is one of the very few now living who can remember my mother, and I gratefully quote what she has written of her as, corroborating my own memories, else, perhaps, discounted by the reader as coloured by a daughter's partiality.

April 4th, 1894.

My dearest Frances,—

I know well that in recalling the days of your bright youth in your grand old home, the most prominent figure amongst those who surrounded you then, must be that of your justly idolised mother, and I cannot help wishing to add my testimony, as of one unbiassed by family ties, to all that you possessed in her while she remained with you; and all that you so sadly lost when she was taken from you. To remember the *châtelaine* of Newbridge is to recall one of the fairest and sweetest memories of my early life. When I first saw that lovely, gracious lady with her almost

angelic countenance and her perfect dignity of manner, I had just come from a gay Eastern capital,—my home from childhood, where no such vision of a typical English gentlewoman had ever appeared before me; and the impression she made upon me was therefore almost a revelation of what a refined, high-bred lady could be in all that was pure and lovely and of good report, and yet I think I only shared in the fascination which she exercised on all who came within the sphere of her influence. To me, almost a stranger, whom she welcomed as your friend under her roof, her exquisite courtesy would alone have been most charming, but for your sake she showed me all the tenderness of her sweet sympathetic nature, and it was no marvel to me that she was the idol of her children and the object of deepest respect and admiration to all who knew her.

Beautiful Newbridge with its splendid hospitality is like a dream to me now, of what a gentleman's estate and country home could be in those days when ancient race and noble family traditions were still of some account.

Ever affectionately yours,

F. M. F. SKENE.

13, New Inn Hall Street, Oxford.

# CHAPTER II.

## *CHILDHOOD.*

## CHAPTER II.

### Childhood.

I was born on the 4th December, 1822, at sunrise in the morning. There had been a memorable storm during the night, and Dublin, where my father had taken a house that my mother might be near her doctor, was strewn with the wrecks of trees and chimney pots. My parents had already four sons, and after the interval of five years since the birth of the youngest, a girl was by no means welcome. I have never had reason, however, to complain of being less cared for or less well treated in every way than my brothers. If I have become in mature years a "Woman's Rights' Woman" it has not been because in my own person I have been made to feel a Woman's Wrongs. On the contrary, my brothers' kindness and tenderness to me have been unfailing from my infancy. I was their "little Fà'," their pet and plaything when they came home for their holidays; and rough words not to speak of knocks,—never reached me from any of them or from my many masculine cousins, some of whom, as my father's wards, I hardly distinguished in childhood from brothers.

A few months after my birth my parents moved to a house named Bower Hill Lodge in Melksham, which my father hired, I believe, to be near his boys at school, and I have some dim recollections of the verandah of the house, and also of certain raisins which I appropriated, and of suffering direful punishment at my father's hands for the crime! Before I was four years old we returned to Newbridge, and I was duly installed with my good old Irish nurse, Mary

Malone, in the large nursery at the end of the north corridor —the most charming room for a child's abode I have ever seen. It was so distant from the regions inhabited by my parents that I was at full liberty to make any amount of noise I pleased; and from the three windows I possessed a commanding view of the stable yard, wherein there was always visible an enchanting spectacle of dogs, cats, horses, grooms, gardeners, and milkmaids. A grand old courtyard it is; a quadrangle about a rood in size surrounded by stables, coach-houses, kennels, a laundry, a beautiful dairy, a labourer's room, a paint shop, a carpenter's shop, a range of granaries and fruit-lofts with a great clock in the pediment in the centre; and a well in the midst of all. Behind the stables and the kennels appear the tops of walnut and chestnut trees and over the coach-houses on the other side can be seen the beautiful old kitchen garden of six acres with its lichen-covered red brick walls, backed again by trees; and its formal straight terraces and broad grass walks.

In this healthful, delightful nursery, and in walks with my nurse about the lawns and shrubberies, the first years of my happy childhood went by; fed in body with the freshest milk and eggs and fruit, everything best for a child; and in mind supplied only with the simple, sweet lessons of my gentle mother. No unwholesome food, physical or moral, was ever allowed to come in my way till body and soul had almost grown to their full stature. When I compare such a lot as this (the common lot, of course, of English girls of the richer classes, blessed with good fathers and mothers) with the case of the hapless young creatures who are fed from infancy with insufficient and unwholesome food, perhaps dosed with gin and opium from the cradle, and who, even as they acquire language, learn foul words, curses and blasphemies,— when I compare, I say, my happy lot with the miserable one of tens of thousands of my brother men and sister women, I

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feel appalled to reflect, by how different a standard must they and I be judged by eternal Justice!

In such an infancy the events were few, but I can remember with amusement the great exercise of my little mind concerning a certain mythical being known as "Peter." The story affords a droll example of the way in which fetishes are created among child-minded savages. One day, (as my mother long afterwards explained to me), I had been hungrily eating a piece of bread and butter out of doors, when one of the greyhounds, of which my father kept several couples, bounded past me and snatched the bread and butter from my little hands. The outcry which I was preparing to raise on my loss was suddenly stopped by the bystanders judiciously awakening my sympathy in Peter's enjoyment, and I was led up to stroke the big dog and make friends with him. Seeing how successful was this diversion, my nurse thenceforward adopted the practice of seizing everything in the way of food, knives, &c., which it was undesirable I should handle, and also of shutting objectionably open doors and windows, exclaiming "O! Peter! Peter has got it! Peter has shut it!"—as the case might be. Accustomed to succumb to this unseen Fate under the name of Peter, and soon forgetting the dog, I came to think there was an all-powerful, invisible Being constantly behind the scenes, and had so far pictured him as distinct from the real original Peter that on one occasion when I was taken to visit at some house where there was an odd looking end of a beam jutting out under the ceiling, I asked in awe-struck tones: "Mama! is that Peter's head?"

My childhood, though a singularly happy, was an unusually lonely one. My dear mother very soon after I was born became lame from a trifling accident to her ankle (ill-treated, unhappily, by the doctors) and she was never once able in all her life to take a walk with me. Of course

I was brought to her continually; first to be nursed,—for she fulfilled that sacred duty of motherhood to all her children, believing that she could never be so sure of the healthfulness of any other woman's constitution as of her own. Later, I seem to my own memory to have been often cuddled up close to her on her sofa, or learning my little lessons, mounted on my high chair beside her, or repeating the Lord's Prayer at her knee. All these memories are infinitely sweet to me. Her low, gentle voice, her smile, her soft breast and arms, the atmosphere of dignity which always surrounded her,—the very odour of her clothes and lace, redolent of dried roses, come back to me after three score years with nothing to mar their sweetness. She never once spoke angrily or harshly to me in all her life, much less struck or punished me; and I—it is a comfort to think it—never, so far as I can recall, disobeyed or seriously vexed her. She had regretted my birth, thinking that she could not live to see me grow to womanhood, and shrinking from a renewal of the cares of motherhood with the additional anxiety of a daughter's education. But I believe she soon reconciled herself to my existence, and made me, first her pet, and then her companion and even her counsellor. She told me, laughingly, how, when I was four years old, my father happening to be away from home she made me dine with her, and as I sat in great state beside her on my little chair I solemnly remarked: "Mama, is it not a very *comflin* thing to have a little girl?" an observation which she justly thought went to prove that she had betrayed sufficiently to my infantine perspicacity that she enjoyed my company at least as much as hers was enjoyed by me.

My nurse who had attended all my brothers, was already an elderly woman when recalled to Newbridge to take charge of me; and though a dear, kind old soul and an excellent nurse, she was naturally not much of a playfellow

for a little child, and it was very rarely indeed that I had any young visitor in my nursery or was taken to see any of my small neighbours. Thus I was from infancy much thrown on my own resources for play and amusement; and from that time to this I have been rather a solitary mortal, enjoying above all things lonely walks and studies; and always finding my spirits rise in hours and days of isolation. I think I may say I have *never* felt depressed when living alone. As a child I have been told I was a very merry little chick, with a round, fair face and abundance of golden hair; a typical sort of Saxon child. I was subject then and for many years after, to furious fits of anger, and on such occasions I misbehaved myself exceedingly. "Nanno" was then wont peremptorily to push me out into the long corridor and bolt the nursery door in my face, saying in her vernacular, "Ah, then! you *bould Puckhawn* (audacious child of Puck)! I'll get *shut* of you!" I think I feel now the hardness of that door against my little toes, as I kicked at it in frenzy. Sometimes, when things were very bad indeed, Nanno conducted me to the end of the corridor at the top of a very long winding stone stair, near the bottom of which my father occasionally passed on his way to the stables. "Yes, Sir! Yes, Sir! She'll be good immadiently, Sir, you needn't come upstairs, Sir!" Then, *sotto voce*, to me, "Don't ye hear the Masther? Be quiet now, my darlint, or he'll come up the stairs!" Of course, "the Masther" seldom or never was really within earshot on these occasions. Had he been so Nanno would have been the last person seriously to invoke his dreaded interference in my discipline. But the alarm usually sufficed to reduce me to submission. I had plenty of toddling about out of doors and sitting in the sweet grass making daisy and dandelion chains, and at home playing with the remnants of my brother's Noah's Ark, and a magnificent old baby-house

which stood in one of the bedrooms, and was so large that I can dimly remember climbing up and getting into the doll's drawing-room.

My fifth birthday was the first milestone on Life's road which I can recall. I recollect being brought in the morning into my mother's darkened bedroom (she was already then a confirmed invalid), and how she kissed and blessed me, and gave me childish presents, and also a beautiful emerald ring which I still possess, and pearl bracelets which she fastened on my little arms. No doubt she wished to make sure that whenever she might die these trinkets should be known to be mine. She and my father also gave me a Bible and Prayer Book, which I could read quite well, and proudly took next Sunday to church for my first attendance, when the solemn occasion was much disturbed by a little girl in a pew below howling for envy of my white beaver bonnet, displayed in the fore-front of the gallery which formed our family seat. "Why did little Miss Robinson cry?" I was deeply inquisitive on the subject, having then and always during my childhood regarded "best clothes" with abhorrence.

Two years later my grandmother, having bestowed on me, at Bath, a sky-blue silk pelisse, I managed nefariously to tumble down on purpose into a gutter full of melted snow the first day it was put on, so as to be permitted to resume my little cloth coat.

Now, aged five, I was emancipated from the nursery and allowed to dine thenceforward at my parents' late dinner, while my good nurse was settled for the rest of her days in a pretty ivy-covered cottage with large garden, at the end of the shrubbery. She lived there for several years with an old woman for servant, who I can well remember, but who must have been of great age, for she had been under-dairymaid to my great great-grandfather, the Archbishop, and used to tell us stories of "old times." This "old Ally's" great grand-

children were still living, recently in the family service in the same cottage which poor "Nanno" occupied. Ally was the last wearer of the real old Irish scarlet cloak in our part of the country; and I can remember admiring it greatly when I used to run by her side and help her to carry her bundle of sticks. Since those days, even the long blue frieze cloak which succeeded universally to the scarlet—a most comfortable, decent, and withal graceful peasant garment, very like the blue cotton one of the Arab fellah-women—has itself nearly or totally disappeared in Fingal.

On the retirement of my nurse, the charge of my little person was committed to my mother's maid and housekeeper, Martha Jones. She came to my mother a blooming girl of eighteen, and she died of old age and sorrow when I left Newbridge at my father's death half-a-century afterwards. She was a fine, fair, broad-shouldered woman, with a certain refinement above her class. Her father had been an officer in the army, and she was educated (not very extensively) at some little school in Dublin where her particular friend was Moore's (the poet's) sister. She used to tell us how Moore as a lad was always contriving to get into the school and romping with the girls. The legend has sufficient verisimilitude to need no confirmation!

"Joney" was indulgence itself, and under her mild sway, and with my mother for instructress in my little lessons of spelling and geography, Mrs. Barbauld, Dr. Watts and Jane Taylor, I was as happy a little animal as well might be. One day being allowed as usual to play on the grass before the drawing-room windows I took it into my head that I should dearly like to go and pay a visit to my nurse at her cottage at the end of the shrubbery. "Joney" had taken me there more than once, but still the mile-long shrubbery, some of it very dark with fir trees and great laurels, complicated with crossing walks, and containing two or three

alarming shelter-huts and *tonnelles* (which I long after regarded with awe), was a tremendous pilgrimage to encounter alone. After some hesitation I set off; ran as long as I could, and then with panting chest and beating heart, went on, daring not to look to right or left, till (after ages as it seemed to me) I reached the little window of my nurse's house in the ivy wall; and set up—loud enough no doubt—a call for "Nanno!" The good soul could not believe her eyes when she found me alone but hugging me in her arms, brought me back as fast as she could to my distracted mother who had, of course, discovered my evasion. Two years later, when I was seven years old, I was naughty enough to run away again, this time in the streets of Bath, in company with a hoop, and the Town Cryer was engaged to "cry" me, but I found my way home at last alone. How curiously vividly silly little incidents like these stand out in the misty memory of childhood, like objects suddenly perceived close to us in a fog! I seem now, after sixty years, to see my nurse's little brown figure and white kerchief, as she rushed out and caught her stray "darlint" in her arms; and also I see a dignified, gouty gentleman leaning on his stick, parading the broad pavement of Bath Crescent, up whose whole person my misguided and muddy hoop went bounding in my second escapade. I ought to apologise perhaps to the reader for narrating such trivial incidents, but they have left a charm in my memory.

At seven I was provided with a nursery governess, and my dear mother's lessons came to an end. So gentle and sweet had they been that I have loved ever since everything she taught me, and have a vivid recollection of the old map book from whence she had herself learned Geography, and of Mrs. Trimmer's Histories, "*Sacred*" and "*Profane;*" not forgetting the almost incredibly bad accompanying volumes of

woodcuts with poor Eli a complete smudge and Sesostris driving the nine kings (with their crowns, of course) harnessed to his chariot. Who would have dreamed we should now possess photos of the mummy of the real Sesostris (Rameses II.), who seemed then quite as mythical a personage as Polyphemus? To remember the hideous aberrations of Art which then illustrated books for children, and compare them to the exquisite pictures in "*Little Folks*," is to realise one of the many changes the world has seen since my childhood. Mrs. Trimmer's books cost, I remember being told, *ten shillings* a-piece! My governess Miss Kinnear's lessons, though not very severe (our old doctor, bless him for it! solemnly advised that I should never be called on to study after twelve o'clock), were far from being as attractive as those of my mother, and as soon as I learned to write, I drew on the gravel walk this, as I conceived, deeply touching and impressive sentence: "*Lessons! Thou tyrant of the mind!*" I could not at all understand my mother's hilarity over this inscription, which proved so convincingly my need, at all events of those particular lessons of which Lindley Murray was the author. I envied the peacock who could sit all day in the sun, and who ate bowls-full of the griddlebread of which I was so fond; and never was expected to learn anything! Poor bird, he came to a sad end. A dog terrified him one day and he took a great flight and was observed to go into one of the tall limes near the house but was never seen alive again. When the leaves fell in the autumn the rain-washed feathers and skeleton of poor Pe-ho were found wedged in a fork of the tree. He had met the fate of "Lost Sir Massingberd."

Some years later, my antipathy to lessons having not at all diminished, I read a book which had just appeared, and of which all the elders of the house were talking, Keith's *Signs of the Times*. In this work, as I remember, it was set

forth that a "Vial" was shortly to be emptied into or near the Euphrates, after which the end of the world was to follow immediately. The writer accordingly warned his readers that they would soon hear startling news from the Euphrates. From that time I persistently inquired of anybody who I saw reading the newspaper (a small sheet which in the Thirties only came three times a week) or who seemed well-informed about public affairs, "What news was there from the Euphrates?" The singular question at last called forth the inquiry, "Why I wanted to know?" and I was obliged to confess that I was hoping for the emptying of the "Vial" which would put an end to my sums and spelling lessons.

My seventh year was spent with my parents at Bath, where we had a house for the winter in James' Square, where brothers and cousins came for the holidays, and in London, where I well remember going with my mother to see the Diorama in the Colosseum in Regent's Park, of St. Peter's, and a Swiss Cottage, and the statues of Tam o' Shanter and his wife (which I had implored her to be allowed to see, having imagined them to be living ogres) and vainly entreating to be taken to see the Siamese Twins. This last longing, however, was gratified just thirty years afterwards. We travelled back to Ireland, posting all the way to Holyhead by the then new high road through Wales and over the Menai Bridge. My chief recollection of the long journey is humiliating. A box of Shrewsbury cakes, exactly like those now sold in the town, was bought for me *in situ*, and I was told to bring it over to Ireland to give to my little cousin Charley. I was pleased to give the cakes to Charley, but then Charley was at the moment far away, and the cakes were always at hand in the carriage; and the road was tedious and the cakes delicious; and so it came to pass somehow that I broke off first a little bit, and then another

day a larger bit, till cake after cake vanished, and with sorrow and shame I was obliged to present the empty box to Charley on my arrival. Greediness alas! has been a besetting sin of mine all my life.

This Charley was a dear little boy, and about this date was occasionally my companion. His father, my uncle, was Captain William Cobbe, R.N., who had fought under Nelson, and at the end of the war, married and took a house near Newbridge, where he acted as my father's agent. He was a fine, brave fellow, and much beloved by everyone. One day, long after his sudden, untimely death, we heard from a coastguardsman who had been a sailor in his ship, that he had probably caught the disease of which he died in the performance of a gallant action, of which he had never told anyone, even his wife. A man had fallen overboard from his ship one bitterly cold night in the northern seas, near Copenhagen. My uncle, on hearing what had happened, jumped from his warm berth and plunged into the sea, where he succeeded in rescuing the sailor, but in doing so caught a chill which eventually shortened his days. He had five children, the eldest being Charley, some months younger than I. When my uncle came over to see his brother and do business, Charley, as he grew old enough to take the walk, was often allowed to come with him; and great was my enjoyment of the unwonted pleasure of a young companion. Considerably greater, I believe, than that of my mother and governess, who justly dreaded the escapades which our fertile little brains rarely failed to devise. We climbed over everything climbable by aid of the arrangement that Charley always mounted on my strong shoulders and then helped me up. One day my father said to us: "Children, there is a savage bull come, you must take care not to go near him." Charley and I looked at each other and mutually understood. The next moment we

were alone we whispered, "We must get some hairs of his tail!" and away we scampered till we found the new bull in a shed in the cow-yard. Valiantly we seized the tail, and as the bull fortunately paid no attention to his Lilliputian foes, we escaped in triumph with the hairs. Another time, a lovely April evening, I remember we were told it was damp, and that we must not go out of the house. We had discovered, however, a door leading out upon the roof,—and we agreed that "*on*" the house could not properly be considered "*out*" of the house; and very soon we were clambering up the slates, and walking along the parapet at a height of fifty or sixty feet from the ground. My mother, passing through one of the halls, observed a group of servants looking up in evident alarm and making signs to us to come down. As quickly as her feebleness permitted she climbed to our door of exit, and called to us over the roofs. Charley and I felt like Adam and Eve on the fatal evening after they had eaten the apple! After dreadful moments of hesitation we came down and received the solemn rebuke and condemnation we deserved. It was not a very severe chastisement allotted to us, though we considered it such. We were told that the game of Pope Joan, promised for the evening, should not be played. That was the severest, if not the only punishment, my mother ever inflicted on me.

On rainy days when Charley and I were driven to amuse ourselves in the great empty rooms and corridors upstairs, we were wont to discuss profound problems of theology. I remember one conclusion relating thereto at which we unanimously arrived. Both of us bore the name of "Power" as a second name, in honour of our grandmother Anne Trench's mother, Fanny Power of Coreen. On this circumstance we founded the certainty that we should both go to Heaven, because we heard it said in church, "The Heavens and *all the Powers* therein."

Alas poor "Little Charley" as everybody called him, after growing to be a fine six-foot fellow, and a very popular officer, died sadly while still young, at the Cape.

In those early days, let us say about my tenth year, and for long afterwards, it was my father's habit to fill his house with all the offshoots of the family at Christmas, and with a good many of them for the Midsummer holidays, when my two eldest brothers and the youngest came home from Charterhouse and Oxford, and the third from Sandhurst. These brothers of mine were kind, dear lads, always gentle and petting to their little sister, who was a mere baby when they were schoolboys, and of course never really a companion to them. I recollect they once tried to teach me Cricket, and straightway knocked me over with a ball; and then carried me, all four in tears and despair, to our mother thinking they had broken my ribs. I was very fond of them, and thought a great deal about their holidays, but naturally in early years saw very little of them.

Beside my brothers, and generally coming to Newbridge at the same holiday seasons, there was a regiment of young cousins, male and female. My mother's only brother, Adjutant General Conway, had five children, all of whom were practically my father's wards during the years of their education at Haileybury and in a ladies' boarding-school in London. Then, beside my father's youngest brother William's family of five, of whom I have already spoken, his next eldest brother, George, of the Horse Artillery (Lieut. General Cobbe in his later years), had five more, and finally the third brother Thomas, went out to India in his youth as aid-de-camp to his cousin, Lord Hastings, held several good appointments there, married the daughter of Azeeze Khan, of Cashmere, had by her ten children (all of whom passed into my father's charge) and finally died, poor fellow, on his voyage home from India, after thirty

years' absence. Thus there were, in fact, including his own children, thirty young people more or less my father's wards, and all of them looking to Newbridge as the place where holidays were naturally spent, and to my father's not very long purse as the resource for everybody in emergencies. One of them, indeed, carried this view of the case rather unfortunately far. A gentleman visiting us, happening to mention that he had lately been at Malta, we naturally asked him if he had met a young officer of our name quartered there? "Oh dear, yes! a delightful fellow! All the ladies adore him. He gives charming picnics, and gets nosegays for them all from Naples." "I am afraid he can scarcely afford that sort of thing," someone timidly observed. "Oh, he says," replied the visitor, "that he has an old uncle somewhere who——Good Lord! I am afraid I have put my foot in it," abruptly concluded our friend, noticing the looks exchanged round the circle.

My father's brother Henry, my god-father, died early and unmarried. He was Rector of Templeton, and was very intimate with his neighbours there, the Edgeworths and Granards. The greater part of the library at Newbridge, as it was in my time, had been collected by him, and included an alarming proportion of divinity. The story of his life might serve for such a novel as his friend, Miss Edgeworth, would have written and entitled "*Procrastination.*" He was much attached for a long time to a charming Miss Lindsay, who was quite willing to accept his hand, had he offered it. My poor uncle, however, continued to flirt and dangle and to postpone any definite declaration, till at last the girl's mother —who, I rather believe, was a Lady Charlotte Lindsay, well known in her generation—told her that a conclusion must be put to this sort of thing. She would invite Mr. Cobbe to their house for a fortnight, and during that time every opportunity should be afforded him of making a proposal in

form, if he should be so minded. If, however, at the end of this probation, he had said nothing, Miss Lindsay was to give him up, and he was to be allowed no more chances of addressing her. The visit was paid, and nothing could be more agreeable or devoted than my uncle's; but he did not propose to Miss Lindsay! The days passed, and as the end of the allotted time drew near, the lady innocently arranged a few walks *en tête-à-tête*, and talked in a manner which afforded him every opportunity of saying the words which seemed always on the tip of his tongue. At last the final day arrived. "My dear," said Lady Charlotte (if such was the mother's name) to her daughter, "I shall go out with the rest of the party for the whole day and leave you and Mr. Cobbe together. When I return, it must be decided one way or the other."

The hours flew in pleasant and confidential talk—still no proposal! Miss Lindsay, who knew that the final minutes of grace were passing for her unconscious lover, once more despairingly tried, being really attached to him, to make him say something which she could report to her mother. As he afterwards averred he was on the very brink of asking her to marry him when he caught the sound of her mother's carriage returning to the door, and said to himself, "I'll wait for another opportunity."

The opportunity was never granted to him. Lady Charlotte gave him his *congé* very peremptorily next morning. My uncle was furious, and in despair; but it was too late! Like other disappointed men he went off rashly, and almost immediately engaged himself (with no delay this time) to Miss Flora Long of Rood Ashton, Wiltshire, a lady of considerable fortune and attractions and of excellent connections, but of such exceedingly rigid piety of the Calvinistic type of the period, that I believe my uncle was soon fairly afraid of his promised bride. At all events his

procrastinations began afresh. He remained at Templeton on one excuse after another, till Miss Long wrote to ask: "Whether he wished to keep their engagement?" My poor uncle was nearly driven now to the wall, but his health was bad and might prove his apology for fresh delays. Before replying to his Flora, he went to Dublin and consulted Sir Philip Crampton. After detailing his ailments, he asked what he ought to do, hoping (I am afraid) that the great surgeon would say, "O you must keep quiet!" Instead of this verdict Crampton said, "Go and get married by all means!" No further excuse was possible, and my poor uncle wrote to say he was on his way to claim his bride. Ere he reached her, however, while stopping at his mother's house in Bath, he was found dead in his bed on the morning on which he should have gone to Rood Ashton. He must have expired suddenly while reading a good little book. All this happened somewhere about 1823.

To return to our old life at Newbridge, about 1833 and for many years afterwards, the assembling of my father's brothers, and brothers' wives and children at Christmas was the great event of the year in my almost solitary childhood. Often a party of twenty or more sat down every day for three or four weeks together in the dining-room, and we younger ones naturally spent the short days and long evenings in boyish and girlish sports and play. Certain very noisy and romping games—Blindman's buff, Prisoner's Bass, Giant, and Puss in the Corner and Hunt the Hare—as we played them through the halls below stairs, and the long corridors and rooms above, still appear to me as among the most delightful things in a world which was then all delight. As we grew a little older and my dear, clever brother Tom came home from Oxford and Germany, charades and plays and masquerading and dancing came into

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fashion. In short our's was, for the time, like other large country-houses, full of happy young people, with the high spirits common in those old days. The rest of the year, except during the summer vacation, when brothers and cousins mustered again, the place was singularly quiet, and my life strangely solitary for a child. Very early I made a *concordat* with each of my four successive governesses, that when lessons were ended, precisely at twelve, I was free to wander where I pleased about the park and woods, to row the boat on the pond or ride my pony on the sands of the sea-shore two miles from the house. I was not to be expected to have any concern with my instructress outside the doors. The arrangement suited them, of course, perfectly; and my childhood was thus mainly a lonely one. I was so uniformly happy that I was (what I suppose few children are) quite conscious of my own happiness. I remember often thinking whether other children were all as happy as I, and sometimes, especially on a spring morning of the 18th March,—my mother's birthday, when I had a holiday, and used to make coronets of primroses and violets for her,—I can recall walking along the grass walks of that beautiful old garden and feeling as if everything in the world was perfect, and my life complete bliss for which I could never thank God enough.

When the weather was too bad to spend my leisure hours out of doors I plunged into the library at haphazard, often making "discovery" of books of which I had never been told, but which, thus found for myself, were doubly precious. Never shall I forget thus falling by chance on *Kubla Khan* in its first pamphlet-shape. I also gloated over Southey's *Curse of Kehama*, and *The Cid* and Scott's earlier works. My mother did very wisely, I think, to allow me thus to rove over the shelves at my own will. By degrees a genuine appetite for reading awoke in me, and I became a

studious girl, as I shall presently describe. Beside the library, however, I had a play-house of my own for wet days. There were, at that time, two garrets only in the house (the bed-rooms having all lofty coved ceilings), and these two garrets, over the lobbies, were altogether disused. I took possession of them; and kept the keys lest anybody should pry into them, and truly they must have been a remarkable sight! On the sloping roofs I pinned the eyes of my peacock's feathers in the relative positions of the stars of the chief constellations; one of my hobbies being Astronomy. On another wall I fastened a rack full of carpenter's tools, which I could use pretty deftly on the bench beneath. The principal wall was an armoury of old court-swords, and home-made pikes, decorated with green and white flags (I was an Irish patriot at that epoch), sundry javelins, bows and arrows, and a magnificently painted shield with the family arms. On the floor of one room was a collection of shells from the neighbouring shore, and lastly there was a table with pens, ink and paper; implements wherewith I perpetrated, *inter alia*, several poems of which I can just recall one. The *motif* of the story was obviously borrowed from a stanza in Moore's Irish Melodies. Even now I do not think the verses very bad for 12 or 13 years old.

THE FISHERMAN OF LOUGH NEAGH.

The autumn wind was roaring high
And the tempest raved in the midnight sky,
When the fisherman's father sank to rest
And left O'Nial the last and best
Of a race of kings who once held sway
From far Fingal to dark Lough Neagh.

The morning shone and the fisherman's bark
Was wafted o'er those waters dark.

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Pronounced "Loch Nay."

And he thought as he sailed of his father's name
Of the kings of Erin's ancient fame,
Of days when 'neath those waters green
The banners of Nial were ever seen,
And where the Knights of the Blood-Red-Tree
Had held of old their revelry;
And where O'Nial's race alone
Had sat upon the regal throne.

While the fisherman thought of the days of old
The sun had left the western sky
And the moon had risen a lamp of gold,
Ere O'Nial deemed that the eve was nigh,
He turned his boat to the mountain side
And it darted away o'er the rippling tide;
Like arrow from an Indian bow
Shot o'er the waves the glancing prow.

The fisherman saw not the point beneath
Which beckoned him on to instant death.
It struck—yet he shrieked not, although his blood
Ran chill at the thought of that fatal flood;
And the voice of O'Nial was silent that day
As he sank 'neath the waters of dark Lough Neagh;

Like when Adam rose from the dust of earth
And felt the joy of his glorious birth,
And where'er he gazed, and where'er he trod,
He felt the presence and smile of God,—
Like the breath of morning to him who long
Has ceased to hear the warblers' song,
And who, in the chamber of death hath lain
With a sickening heart and a burning brain;
So rushed the joy through O'Nial's mind
When the waters dark above him joined,
And he felt that Heaven had made him be
A spirit of light and eternity.

He gazed around, but his dazzled sight
Saw not the spot from whence he fell,
For beside him rose a spire so bright
No mortal tongue could its splendours tell
Nor human eye endure its light.

And he looked and saw that pillars of gold
The crystal column did proudly hold;
And he turned and walked in the light blue sea
Upon a silver balcony,
Which rolled around the spire of light
And laid on the golden pillars bright.

Descending from the pillars high,
He passed through portals of ivory
E'en to the hall of living gold
The palace of the kings of old.
The harp of Erin sounded high
And the crotal joined the melody,
And the voice of happy spirits round
Prolonged and harmonized the sound.

"All hail, O'Nial!"—

and so on, and so on! I wrote a great deal of this sort of thing then and for a few years afterwards; and of course, like everyone else who has ever been given to waste paper and ink, I tried my hand on a tragedy. I had no real power or originality, only a little Fancy perhaps, and a dangerous facility for flowing versification. After a time my early ambition to become a Poet died out under the terrible hard mental strain and very serious study through which I passed in seeking religious faith. But I have always passionately loved poetry of a certain kind, specially that of Shelley; and perhaps some of my prose writings have been the better for my early efforts to cultivate harmony and for my delight in good similes. This last propensity is even now very strong in me, and whenever I write *con amore*, comparisons and metaphors come tumbling out of my head, till my difficulty is to exclude mixed ones!

My education at this time was of a simple kind. After Miss Kinnear left us to marry, I had another nursery governess, a good creature properly entitled "Miss Daly," but called by my profane brothers, "the Daily Nuisance."

After her came a real governess, the daughter of a bankrupt Liverpool merchant who made my life a burden with her strict discipline and her "I-have-seen-better-days" airs; and who, at last, I detected in a trick which to me appeared one of unparalleled turpitude! She had asked me to let her read something which I had written in a copy-book and I had peremptorily declined to obey her request, and had locked up my papers in my beloved little writing-desk which my dear brother Tom had bought for me out of his school-boy's pocket money. The keys of this desk I kept with other things in one of the old-fashioned pockets which everybody then wore, and which formed a separate article of under clothing. This pocket my maid naturally placed at night on the chair beside my little bed, and the curtains of the bed being drawn, Miss W. no doubt after a time concluded I was asleep and cautiously approached the chair on tiptoe. As it happened I was wide awake, having at that time the habit of repeating certain hymns and other religious things to myself before I went to sleep; and when I perceived through the white curtain the shadow of my governess close outside, and then heard the slight jingle made by my keys as she abstracted them from my pocket, I felt as if I were witness of a crime! Anything so base I had never dreamed as existing outside story books of wicked children. Drawing the curtain I could see that Miss W. had gone with her candle into the inner room (one of the old "powdering closets" attached to all the rooms in Newbridge) and was busy with the desk which lay on the table therein. Very shortly I heard the desk close again with an angry click,—and no wonder! Poor Miss W., who no doubt fancied she was going to detect her strange pupil in some particular naughtiness, found the MS. in the desk, to consist of solemn religious "Reflections," in the style of Mrs. Trimmer; and of a poetical description

(in round hand) of the *Last Judgment!* My governess replaced the bunch of keys in my pocket and noiselessly withdrew, but it was long before I could sleep for sheer horror; and next day I, of course, confided to my mother the terrible incident. Nothing, I think, was said to Miss W. about it, but she was very shortly afterwards allowed to return to her beloved Liverpool, where, for all I know, she may be living still.

My fourth and last governess was a remarkable woman, a Mdlle. Montriou, a person of considerable force of character, and in many respects an admirable teacher. With her I read a good deal of solid history, beginning with Rollin and going on to Plutarch and Gibbon; also some modern historians. She further taught me systematically a scheme of chronology and royal successions, till I had an amount of knowledge of such things which I afterwards found was not shared by any of my schoolfellows. She had the excellent sense also to allow me to use a considerable part of my lesson hours with a map-book before me, asking her endless questions on all things connected with the various countries; and as she was extremely well and widely informed, this was almost the best part of my instruction. I became really interested in these studies, and also in the great poets, French and English, to whom she introduced me. Of course my governess taught me music, including what was then called *Thorough Bass*, and now *Harmony;* but very little of the practical part of performance could I learn then or at any time. Independently of her, I read every book on Astronomy which I could lay hold of, and I well remember the excitement wherewith I waited for years for the appearance of the Comet of 1835, which one of these books had foretold. At last a report reached me that the village tailor had seen the comet the previous night. Of course I scanned the sky with renewed ardour, and thought I had discovered the desired object in a misty-looking star of

which my planisphere gave no notice. My father however pooh-poohed this bold hypothesis, and I was fain to wait till the next night. Then, as soon as it was dark, I ran up to a window whence I could command the constellation wherein the comet was bound to show itself. A small hazy star—and a *long train of light from it*—greeted my enchanted eyes! My limbs could hardly bear me as I tore downstairs into the drawing-room, nor my voice publish the triumphant intelligence, "It *is* the comet!" "It *has* a tail!" Everybody (in far too leisurely a way as I considered) went up and saw it, and confessed that the comet it certainly must be, with that appendage of the tail! Few events in my long life have caused me such delightful excitement. This was in 1835.

# CHAPTER III.

## *SCHOOL AND AFTER.*

## CHAPTER III.

### School and After.

When my father, in 1836, had decided, by my governess's advice, to send me to school, my dear mother, though already old and feeble, made the journey, long as it was in those days, from Ireland to Brighton to see for herself where I was to be placed, and to invoke the kindness of my schoolmistresses for me. We sailed to Bristol—a 30 hours' passage usually, but sometimes longer,—and then travelled by postchaises to Brighton, taking, I think, three days on the road and visiting Stonehenge by the way, to my mother's great delight. My eldest brother, then at Oxford, attended her and acted courier. When we came in sight of Brighton the lamps were lighted along the long perspective of the shore. Gas was still sufficiently a novelty to cause this sight to be immensely impressive to us all.

Next day my mother took me to my future tyrants, and fondly bargained (as she was paying enormously) that I should have sundry indulgences, and principally a bedroom to myself. A room was shown to her with only one small bed in it, and this she was told would be mine. When I went to it next night, heart broken after her departure, I found that another bed had been put up, and a schoolfellow was already asleep in it. I flung myself down on my knees by my own and cried my heart out, and was accordingly reprimanded next morning before the whole school for having been seen to cry at my prayers.*

* Part of the following description of my own and my mother's school appeared some years ago in a periodical, now, I believe, extinct.

The education of women was probably at its lowest ebb about half-a-century ago. It was at that period more pretentious than it had ever been before, and infinitely more costly than it is now; and it was likewise more shallow and senseless than can easily be believed. To inspire young women with due gratitude for their present privileges, won for them by my contemporaries, I can think of nothing better than to acquaint them with some of the features of school-life in England in the days of their mothers. I say advisedly the days of their mothers, for in those of their grandmothers, things were by no means equally bad. There was much less pretence and more genuine instruction, so far as it extended.

For a moment let us, however, go back to these earlier grandmothers' schools, say those of the year 1790 or thereabouts. From the reports of my own mother, and of a friend whose mother was educated in the same place, I can accurately describe a school which flourished at that date in the fashionable region of Queen Square, Bloomsbury. The mistress was a certain Mrs. Devis, who must have been a woman of ability for she published a very good little English Grammar for the express use of her pupils; also a Geography, and a capital book of maps, which possessed the inestimable advantage of recording only those towns, cities, rivers, and mountains which were mentioned in the Geography, and not confusing the mind (as maps are too apt to do) with extraneous and superfluous towns and hills. I speak with personal gratitude of those venerable books, for out of them chiefly I obtained such inklings of Geography as have sufficed generally for my wants through life; the only disadvantage they entailed being a firm impression, still rooted in my mind, that there is a "Kingdom of Poland" somewhere about the middle of Europe.

Beside Grammar and Geography and a very fair share of history ("Ancient" derived from Rollin, and "Sacred" from Mrs. Trimmer), the young ladies at Mrs. Devis' school

learned to speak and read French with a very good accent, and to play the harpsichord with taste, if not with a very learned appreciation of "severe" music. The "Battle of Prague" and Hook's Sonatas were, I believe, their culminating achievements. But it was not considered in those times that packing the brains of girls with facts, or even teaching their fingers to run over the keys of instruments, or to handle pen and pencil, was the Alpha and Omega of education. William of Wykeham's motto, "Manners makyth Manne," was understood to hold good emphatically concerning the making of Woman. The abrupt speaking, courtesy-neglecting, slouching, slangy young damsel who may now perhaps carry off the glories of a University degree, would have seemed to Mrs. Devis still needing to be taught the very rudiments of feminine knowledge. "Decorum" (delightful word! the very sound of which brings back the smell of Maréchale powder) was the imperative law of a lady's inner life as well as of her outward habits; and in Queen Square nothing that was not decorous was for a moment admitted. Every movement of the body in entering and quitting a room, in taking a seat and rising from it, was duly criticised. There was kept, in the back premises, a carriage taken off the wheels, and propped up *en permanence*, for the purpose of enabling the young ladies to practise ascending and descending with calmness and grace, and without any unnecessary display of their ankles. Every girl was dressed in the full fashion of the day. My mother, like all her companions, wore hair-powder and rouge on her cheeks when she entered the school a blooming girl of fifteen; that excellent rouge at five guineas a pot, which (as she explained to me in later years) did not spoil the complexion like ordinary compounds, and which I can witness really left a beautiful, clear skin when disused thirty years afterwards.

Beyond these matters of fashion, however,—so droll now to remember,—there must have been at Mrs. Devis' seminary a great deal of careful training in what may be called the great Art of Society; the art of properly paying and receiving visits, of saluting acquaintances in the street and drawing-room; and of writing letters of compliment. When I recall the type of perfect womanly gentleness and high breeding which then and there was formed, it seems to me as if, in comparison, modern manners are all rough and brusque. We have graceful women in abundance still, but the peculiar old-fashioned suavity, the tact which made everybody in a company happy and at ease,—most of all the humblest individual present,—and which at the same time effectually prevented the most audacious from transgressing *les bienséances* by a hair; of that suavity and tact we seem to have lost the tradition.

The great Bloomsbury school, however, passed away at length, good Mrs. Devis having departed to the land where I trust the Rivers of Paradise formed part of her new study of Geography. Nearly half-a-century later, when it came to my turn to receive education, it was not in London but in Brighton that the ladies' schools most in estimation were to be found. There were even then (about 1836) not less than a hundred such establishments in the town, but that at No. 32, Brunswick Terrace, of which Miss Runciman and Miss Roberts were mistresses, and which had been founded some time before by a celebrated Miss Poggi, was supposed to be *nec pluribus impar*. It was, at all events, the most outrageously expensive, the nominal tariff of £120 or £130 per annum representing scarcely a fourth of the charges for "extras" which actually appeared in the bills of many of the pupils. My own, I know, amounted to £1,000 for two years' schooling.

I shall write of this school quite frankly, since the two

poor ladies, well-meaning but very unwise, to whom it belonged have been dead for nearly thirty years, and it can hurt nobody to record my conviction that a better system than theirs could scarcely have been devised had it been designed to attain the maximum of cost and labour and the minimum of solid results. It was the typical Higher Education of the period, carried out to the extreme of expenditure and high pressure.

Profane persons were apt to describe our school as a Convent, and to refer to the back door of our garden, whence we issued on our dismal diurnal walks, as the "postern." If we in any degree resembled nuns, however, it was assuredly not those of either a Contemplative or Silent Order. The din of our large double schoolrooms was something frightful. Sitting in either of them, four pianos might be heard going at once in rooms above and around us, while at numerous tables scattered about the rooms there were girls reading aloud to the governesses and reciting lessons in English, French, German, and Italian. This hideous clatter continued the entire day till we went to bed at night, there being no time whatever allowed for recreation, unless the dreary hour of walking with our teachers (when we recited our verbs), could so be described by a fantastic imagination. In the midst of the uproar we were obliged to write our exercises, to compose our themes, and to commit to memory whole pages of prose. On Saturday afternoons, instead of play, there was a terrible ordeal generally known as the "Judgment Day." The two school-mistresses sat side by side, solemn and stern, at the head of the long table. Behind them sat all the governesses as Assessors. On the table were the books wherein our evil deeds of the week were recorded; and round the room against the wall, seated on stools of penitential discomfort, we sat, five-and-twenty "damosels,"

anything but "Blessed," expecting our sentences according to our ill-deserts. It must be explained that the fiendish ingenuity of some teacher had invented for our torment a system of imaginary "cards," which we were supposed to "lose" (though we never gained any) whenever we had not finished all our various lessons and practisings every night before bed-time, or whenever we had been given the mark for "stooping," or had been impertinent, or had been "turned" in our lessons, or had been marked "P" by the music master, or had been convicted of "disorder" (*e.g.*, having our long shoe-strings untied), or, lastly, had told lies! Any one crime in this heterogeneous list entailed the same penalty, namely, the sentence, "You have lost your card, Miss So-and-so, for such and such a thing;" and when Saturday came round, if three cards had been lost in the week, the law wreaked its justice on the unhappy sinner's head! Her confession having been wrung from her at the awful judgment-seat above described, and the books having been consulted, she was solemnly scolded and told to sit in the corner for the rest of the evening! Anything more ridiculous than the scene which followed can hardly be conceived. I have seen (after a week in which a sort of feminine barring-out had taken place) no less than nine young ladies obliged to sit for hours in the angles of the three rooms, like naughty babies, with their faces to the wall; half of them being quite of marriageable age, and all dressed, as was *de rigueur* with us every day, in full evening attire of silk or muslin, with gloves and kid slippers. Naturally, Saturday evenings, instead of affording some relief to the incessant overstrain of the week, were looked upon with terror as the worst time of all. Those who escaped the fell destiny of the corner were allowed, if they chose to write to their parents, but our letters were perforce committed at night to the schoolmistress to seal, and were not as may be

imagined, exactly the natural outpouring of our sentiments as regarded those ladies and their school.

Our household was a large one. It consisted of the two schoolmistresses and joint proprietors, of the sister of one of them and another English governess; of a French, an Italian, and a German lady teacher; of a considerable staff of respectable servants; and finally of twenty-five or twenty-six pupils, varying in age from nine to nineteen. All the pupils were daughters of men of some standing, mostly country gentlemen, members of Parliament, and offshoots of the peerage. There were several heiresses amongst us, and one girl whom we all liked and recognised as the beauty of the school, the daughter of Horace Smith, author of *Rejected Addresses*. On the whole, looking back after the long interval, it seems to me that the young creatures there assembled were full of capabilities for widely extended usefulness and influence. Many were decidedly clever and nearly all were well disposed. There was very little malice or any other vicious ideas or feelings, and no worldliness at all amongst us. I make this last remark because the novel of *Rose, Blanche and Violet*, by the late Mr. G. H. Lewes, is evidently intended in sundry details to describe this particular school, and yet most falsely represents the girls as thinking a great deal of each other's wealth or comparative poverty. Nothing was further from the fact. One of our heiresses, I well remember, and another damsel of high degree, the granddaughter of a duke, were our constant butts for their ignorance and stupidity, rather than the objects of any preferential flattery. Of vulgarity of feeling of the kind imagined by Mr. Lewes, I cannot recall a trace.

But all this fine human material was deplorably wasted. Nobody dreamed that any one of us could in later life be more or less than an "Ornament of Society." That a pupil in that school should ever become an artist, or authoress, would

have been looked upon by both Miss Runciman and Miss Roberts as a deplorable dereliction. Not that which was good in itself or useful to the community, or even that which would be delightful to ourselves, but that which would make us admired in society, was the *raison d'être* of each requirement. Everything was taught us in the inverse ratio of its true importance. At the bottom of the scale were Morals and Religion, and at the top were Music and Dancing; miserably poor music, too, of the Italian school then in vogue, and generally performed in a showy and tasteless manner on harp or piano. I can recall an amusing instance in which the order of precedence above described was naïvely betrayed by one of our schoolmistresses when she was admonishing one of the girls who had been detected in a lie. "Don't you know, you naughty girl," said Miss R. impressively, before the whole school: "don't you know we had *almost* rather find you have a P——" (the mark of Pretty Well) "in your music, than tell such falsehoods?"

It mattered nothing whether we had any "music in our souls" or any voices in our throats, equally we were driven through the dreary course of practising daily for a couple of hours under a German teacher, and then receiving lessons twice or three times a week from a music master (Griesbach by name) and a singing master. Many of us, myself in particular, in addition to these had a harp master, a Frenchman named Labarre, who gave us lessons at a guinea apiece, while we could only play with one hand at a time. Lastly there were a few young ladies who took instructions in the new instruments, the concertina and the accordion!

The waste of money involved in all this, the piles of useless music, and songs never to be sung, for which our parents had to pay, and the loss of priceless time for ourselves, were truly deplorable; and the result of course in many cases (as in my own) complete failure. One day I said to the good

little German teacher, who nourished a hopeless attachment for Schiller's Marquis Posa, and was altogether a sympathetic person, "My dear Fraulein, I mean to practise this piece of Beethoven's till I conquer it." "My dear," responded the honest Fraulein, "you do practice that piece for seex hours a day, and you do live till you are seexty, at the end you will *not* play it!" Yet so hopeless a pupil was compelled to learn for years, not only the piano, but the harp and singing!

Next to music in importance in our curriculum came dancing. The famous old Madame Michaud and her husband both attended us constantly, and we danced to their direction in our large play-room (*lucus a non lucendo*), till we had learned not only all the dances in use in England in that anti-polka epoch, but almost every national dance in Europe, the Minuet, the Gavotte, the Cachucha, the Bolero, the Mazurka, and the Tarantella. To see the stout old lady in her heavy green velvet dress, with furbelow a foot deep of sable, going through the latter cheerful performance for our ensample, was a sight not to be forgotten. Beside the dancing we had "calisthenic" lessons every week from a "Capitaine" Somebody, who put us through manifold exercises with poles and dumbbells. How much better a few good country scrambles would have been than all these calisthenics it is needless to say, but our dismal walks were confined to parading the esplanade and neighbouring terraces. Our parties never exceeded six, a governess being one of the number, and we looked down from an immeasurable height of superiority on the processions of twenty and thirty girls belonging to other schools. The governess who accompanied us had enough to do with her small party, for it was her duty to utilise these brief hours of bodily exercise by hearing us repeat our French, Italian or German verbs, according to her own nationality.

Next to Music and Dancing and Deportment, came Drawing, but that was not a sufficiently *voyant* accomplishment, and no

great attention was paid to it; the instruction also being of a second-rate kind, except that it included lessons in perspective which have been useful to me ever since. Then followed Modern Languages. No Greek or Latin were heard of at the school, but French, Italian and German were chattered all day long, our tongues being only set at liberty at six o'clock to speak English. *Such* French, such Italian, and such German as we actually spoke may be more easily imagined than described. We had bad "Marks" for speaking wrong languages, *e.g.*, French when we bound to speak Italian or German, and a dreadful mark for bad French, which was transferred from one to another all day long, and was a fertile source of tears and quarrels, involving as it did a heavy lesson out of Noel et Chapsal's Grammar on the last holder at night. We also read in each language every day to the French, Italian and German ladies, recited lessons to them, and wrote exercises for the respective masters who attended every week. One of these foreign masters, by the way, was the patriot Berchet; a sad, grim-looking man of whom I am afraid we rather made fun; and on one occasion, when he had gone back to Italy, a compatriot, whom we were told was a very great personage indeed, took his classes to prevent them from being transferred to any other of the Brighton teachers of Italian. If my memory have not played me a trick, this illustrious substitute for Berchet was Manzoni, the author of the *Promessi Sposi;* a distinguished-looking middle-aged man, who won all our hearts by pronouncing everything we did admirable, even, I think, on the occasion when one young lady freely translated Tasso,—

"Fama e terre acquistasse,"

into French as follows:—

"Il acquit la femme et la terre"!

Naturally after (a very long way after) foreign languages came the study of English. We had a writing and arithmetic master (whom we unanimously abhorred and despised, though one and all of us grievously needed his instructions) and an "English master," who taught us to write "themes," and to whom I, for one, feel that I owe, perhaps, more than to any other teacher in that school, few as were the hours which we were permitted to waste on so insignificant an art as composition in our native tongue!

Beyond all this, our English studies embraced one long, awful lesson each week to be repeated to the schoolmistress herself by a class, in history one week, in geography the week following. Our first class, I remember, had once to commit to memory—Heaven alone knows how—no less than thirteen pages of Woodhouselee's *Universal History!*

Lastly, as I have said, in point of importance, came our religious instruction. Our well-meaning schoolmistresses thought it was obligatory on them to teach us something of the kind, but, being very obviously altogether worldly women themselves, they were puzzled how to carry out their intentions. They marched us to church every Sunday when it did not rain, and they made us on Sunday mornings repeat the Collect and Catechism; but beyond these exercises of body and mind, it was hard for them to see what to do for our spiritual welfare. One Ash Wednesday, I remember, they provided us with a dish of salt-fish, and when this was removed to make room for the roast mutton, they addressed us in a short discourse, setting forth the merits of fasting, and ending by the remark that they left us free to take meat or not as we pleased, but that they hoped we should fast; "it would be good for our souls AND OUR FIGURES!"

Each morning we were bound publicly to repeat a text out of certain little books, called *Daily Bread*, left in our bedrooms, and always scanned in frantic haste while "doing-up"

our hair at the glass, or gabbled aloud by one damsel so occupied while her room-fellow (there were never more than two in each bed-chamber) was splashing about behind the screen in her bath. Down, when the prayer-bell rang, both were obliged to hurry and breathlessly to await the chance of being called on first to repeat the text of the day, the penalty for oblivion being the loss of a "card." Then came a chapter of the Bible, read verse by verse amongst us, and then our books were shut and a solemn question was asked. On one occasion I remember it was: "What have you just been reading, Miss S——?" Miss S—— (now a lady of high rank and fashion, whose small wits had been wool-gathering) peeped surreptitiously into her Bible again, and then responded with just confidence, "The First Epistle, Ma'am, of *General Peter*."

It is almost needless to add, in concluding these reminiscences, that the heterogeneous studies pursued in this helter-skelter fashion were of the smallest possible utility in later life; each acquirement being of the shallowest and most imperfect kind, and all real education worthy of the name having to be begun on our return home, after we had been pronounced "finished." Meanwhile the strain on our mental powers of getting through daily, for six months at a time, this mass of ill-arranged and miscellaneous lessons, was extremely great and trying.

One droll reminiscence must not be forgotten. The pupils at Miss Runciman's and Miss Roberts' were all supposed to have obtained the fullest instruction in Science by attending a course of Nine Lectures delivered by a gentleman named Walker in a public room in Brighton. The course comprised one Lecture on Electricity, another on Galvanism, another on Optics, others I think, on Hydrostatics, Mechanics, and Pneumatics, and finally three, which gave me infinite satisfaction, on Astronomy.

If true education be the instilling into the mind, not so much Knowledge, as the desire for Knowledge, mine at school certainly proved a notable failure. I was brought home (no girl could travel in those days alone) from Brighton by a coach called the *Red Rover*, which performed, as a species of miracle, in one day the journey to Bristol, from whence I embarked for Ireland. My convoy-brother naturally mounted the box, and left me to enjoy the interior all day by myself; and the reflections of those solitary hours of first emancipation remain with me as lively as if they had taken place yesterday. "What a delightful thing it is," so ran my thoughts "to have done with study! Now I may really enjoy myself! I know as much as any girl in our school, and since it is the best school in England, I *must* know all that it can ever be necessary for a lady to know. I will not trouble my head ever again with learning anything; but read novels and amuse myself for the rest of my life."

This noble resolve lasted I fancy a few months, and then, depth below depth of my ignorance revealed itself very unpleasantly! I tried to supply first one deficiency and then another, till after a year or two, I began to educate myself in earnest. The reader need not be troubled with a long story. I spent four years in the study of History—constructing while I did so some Tables of Royal Successions on a plan of my own which enabled me to see at a glance the descent, succession and date of each reigning sovereign of every country, ancient and modern, possessing any History of which I could find a trace. These Tables I still have by me, and they certainly testify to considerable industry. Then the parson of our parish, who had been a tutor in Dublin College, came up three times a week for several years, and taught me a little Greek (enough to read the Gospels and to stumble through Plato's *Krito*), and rather more geometry, to which science I took an immense

fancy, and in which he carried me over Euclid and Conic Sections, and through two most delightful books of Archimedes' spherics. I tried Algebra, but had as much disinclination for that form of mental labour as I had enjoyment in the reasoning required by Geometry. My tutor told me he was able to teach me in one lesson as many propositions as he habitually taught the undergraduates of Dublin College in two. I have ever since strongly recommended this study to women as specially fitted to counteract our habits of hasty judgment and slovenly statement, and to impress upon us the nature of real demonstration.

I also read at this time, by myself, as many of the great books of the world as I could reach; making it a rule always (whether bored or not) to go on to the end of each, and also following generally Gibbon's advice, viz., to rehearse in one's mind in a walk before beginning a great book all that one knows of the subject, and then, having finished it, to take another walk, and register how much has been added to our store of ideas. In these ways I read all the *Faery Queen*, all Milton's poetry, and the *Divina Commedia* and *Gerusalemme Liberata* in the originals. Also (in translations) I read through the Iliad, Odyssey, Æneid, Pharsalia, and all or nearly all, Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Ovid, Tacitus, Xenophon, Herodotus, Thucydides, &c. There was a fairly good library at Newbridge, and I could also go when I pleased, and read in Archbishop Marsh's old library in Dublin, where there were splendid old books, though none I think more recent than a hundred and fifty years before my time. My mother possessed a small collection of classics—Dryden, Pope, Milton, Horace, &c., which she gave me, and I bought for myself such other books as I needed out of my liberal pin-money. Happily, I had at that time a really good memory for literature, being able to carry away almost the words of passages which much interested me in prose or

verse, and to bring them into use when required, though I had, oddly enough, at the same period so imperfect a recollection of persons and daily events that, being very anxious to do ustice to our servants, I was obliged to keep a book of memoranda of the characters and circumstances of all who left us, that I might give accurate and truthful recommendations.

By degrees these discursive studies—I took up various hobbies from time to time—Astronomy, Architecture, Heraldry, and many others—centred more and more on the answers which have been made through the ages by philosophers and prophets to the great questions of the human soul. I read such translations as were accessible in those pre-Müller days, of Eastern Sacred books; Anquetil du Perron's *Zend Avesta* (twice); and Sir William Jones's *Institutes of Menu;* and all I could learn about the Greek and Alexandrian philosophers from Diogenes Laertius and the old translators (Taylor, of Norwich, and others) and a large Biographical Dictionary which we had in our library. Having always a passion for Synopses, I constructed, somewhere about 1840, a Table, big enough to cover a sheet of double-elephant paper, wherein the principal Greek philosophers were ranged,—their lives, ethics, cosmogonies and special doctrines,—in separate columns. After this I made a similar Table of the early Gnostics and other heresiarchs, with the aid of Mosheim, Sozomen, and Eusebius.

Does the reader smile to find these studies recorded as the principal concern of the life of a young lady from 16 to 20, and in fact to 35 years of age? It was even so! They *were* (beside Religion, of which I shall speak elsewhere) my supreme interest. As I have said in the beginning, I had neither cares of love, or cares of money to occupy my mind or my heart. My parents wished me to go a little into society when I was about 18, and I was, for the moment, pleased and interested in the few balls and drawing-rooms (in

Dublin) to which my father and afterwards my uncle, General George Cobbe, conducted me. But I was rather bored than amused by my dancing partners, and my dear mother, already in declining years and completely an invalid, could never accompany me, and I pined for her motherly presence and guidance, the loss of which was only half compensated for by her comments on the long reports of all I had seen and said and done, as I sat on her bed, on my return home. By degrees also, my thoughts came to be so gravely employed by efforts to find my way to religious truth, that the whole glamour of social pleasures disappeared and became a weariness; and by the time I was 19 I begged to be allowed to stay at home and only to receive our own guests, and attend the occasional dinners in our neighbourhood. With some regret my parents yielded the point, and except for a visit every two or three years to London for a few weeks of sightseeing, and one or two trips in Ireland to houses of our relations, my life, for a long time, was perfectly secluded. I have found some verses in which I described it.

"I live! I live! and never to man
More joy in life was given,
Or power to make, as I can make,
Of this bright world a heaven.

"My mind is free; my limbs are clad
With strength which few may know,
And every eye smiles lovingly;
On earth I have no foe.

"With pure and peaceful pleasures blessed
Speed my calm and studious days,
While the noblest works of mightiest minds
Lie open to my gaze."

In one of our summer excursions I remember my father and one of my brothers and I lionized Winchester, and came

upon an exquisite chapel, which was at that time, and perhaps still is, a sort of sanctuary of books, in the midst of a lovely, silent cloister. To describe the longing I felt then, and long after, to spend all my life studying there in peace and undisturbed, "hiving learning with each studious year,"—would be impossible!

I think there is a great, and it must be said lamentable, difference between the genuine passion for study such as many men and women in my time and before it experienced, and the hurried anxious *gobbling up* of knowledge which has been introduced by competitive examinations, and the eternal necessity for *getting something else beside knowledge;* something to be represented by M.A. or B.Sch., or, perhaps, by £ s. d.! When I was young there were no honours, no rewards of any kind for a woman's learning; and as there were no examinations, there was no hurry or anxiety. There was only healthy thirst for knowledge of one kind or another, and of one kind after another. When I came across a reference to a matter which I did not understand, it was not then necessary, as it seems to be to young students now, to hasten over it, leaving the unknown name, or event, or doctrine, like an enemy's fortress on the road of an advancing army. I stopped and sat down before it, perhaps for days and weeks, but I conquered it at last, and then went on my way strengthened by the victory. Recently, I have actually heard of students at a college for ladies being advised by their "coach" to *skip a number of propositions in Euclid*, as it was certain they would not be examined in them! One might as well help a climber by taking rungs out of his ladder! I can make no sort of pretensions to have acquired, even in my best days, anything like the instruction which the young students of Girton and Newnham and Lady Margaret Hall are so fortunate as to possess; and much I envy their opportunities for obtaining

accurate scholarship. But I know not whether the method they follow can, on the whole, convey as much of the pure delight in learning as did my solitary early studies. When the summer morning sun rose over the trees and shone as it often did into my bedroom finding me still over my books from the evening before, and when I then sauntered out to take a sleep on one of the garden seats in the shrubbery, the sense of having learned something, or cleared up some hitherto doubted point, or added a store of fresh ideas to my mental riches, was one of purest satisfaction.

As to writing as well as reading, I had very early a great love of the art and frequently wrote small essays and stories, working my way towards something of good style. Our English master at school on seeing my first exercise (on Roman History, I think it was), had asked Miss Runciman whether she were sure I had written it unaided, and observed that the turn of the sentences were not girl-like, and that he "thought I should grow up to be a fine writer." My schoolmistress laughed, of course, at the suggestion, and I fancy she thought less of poor Mr. Turnbull for his absurd judgment. But as men and women who are to be good musicians love their pianos and violins as children, so I early began to love that noble instrument, the English Language, and in my small way to study how to play upon it. At one time when quite young I wrote several imitations of the style of Gibbon and other authors, just as an exercise. Eventually without of course copying anybody in particular, I fell into what I must suppose to be a style of my own, since those familiar with it easily detect passages of my writing wherever they come across them. I was at a later time much interested in seeing many of my articles translated into French (chiefly in the French Protestant periodicals) and to note how little it is possible to render the real feeling of such words as those with which

*our* tongue supplies us by those of that language. At a still later date, when I edited the *Zoophile*, I was perpetually disappointed by the failures of the best translators I could engage, to render my meaning. Among the things for which to be thankful in life, I think we, English, ought to assign no small place to our inheritance of that grand legacy of our forefathers, the English Language.

While these studies were going on, from the time I left school in 1838 till I left Newbridge in 1857, it may be noted that I had the not inconsiderable charge of keeping house for my father. My mother at once put the whole responsibility of the matter in my hands, refusing even to be told beforehand what I had ordered for the rather formal dinner parties of those days, and I accepted the task with pleasure, both because I could thus relieve her, and also because then and ever since I have really liked housekeeping. I love a well-ordered house and table, rooms pleasantly arranged and lighted, and decorated with flowers, hospitable attentions to guests, and all the other pleasant cares of the mistress of a family. In the midst of my studies I always went every morning regularly to my housekeeper's room and wrote out a careful *menu* for the upstairs and downstairs meals. I visited the larders and the fine old kitchen frequently, and paid the servants' wages on every quarter day; and once a year went over my lists of everything in the charge of either the men or women servants. In particular I took very special care of the china, which happened to be magnificent; and hereby hangs the memory of a droll incident with which I may close this chapter.

A certain dignified old lady, the Hon. Mrs. L., had paid a visit to Newbridge with her daughters, and in return she invited one of my brothers and myself to spend some days at her "show" place in Co. Wicklow. While there I talked with the enthusiasm of my age to her very charming young

daughters of the pleasures of study, urging them strenuously to learn Greek and Mathematics. Mrs. L., overhearing me, intervened in the conversation, and said somewhat tartly, "I do not at all agree with you, Miss Cobbe! I think the duty of a lady is to attend to her house, and to her husband and children. I beg you will not incite my girls to take up your studies."

Of course I bowed to the decree, and soon after began admiring some of the china about the room. "There is," said Mrs. L., "some very fine old china belonging to this house. There is one dessert-service which is said to have cost £800 forty or fifty years ago. Would you like to see it?"

Having gratefully accepted the invitation, I followed my hostess to the basement of the house, and there, for the first time in my life, I recognised that condition of disorder and slatternliness which I had heard described as characteristic of Irish houses. At last we reached an under-ground china closet, and after some delay and reluctance on the part of the servant, a key was found and the door opened. There, on the shelves and the floor, lay piled, higgledy-piggledy, dishes and plates of exquisite china mixed up with the commonest earthenware jugs, basins, cups, and willow-pattern kitchen dishes; and the great dessert-service among the rest—*with the dessert of the previous summer rotting on the plates!* Yes! there was no mistake. Some of the superb plates handed to me by the servant for examination by the light of the window, had on them peach and plum-stones and grape-stalks, obviously left as they had been taken from the table in the dining-room many months before! Poor Mrs. L. muttered some expressions of dismay and reproach to her servants, which of course I did not seem to hear, but I had not the strength of mind to resist saying: "Indeed this is a splendid service; *Style de*

*l'Empire* I should call it. We have nothing like it, but when next you do us the pleasure to come to Newbridge I shall like to show you our Indian and Worcester services. Do you know I always take up all the plates and dishes myself when they have been washed the day after a party, and put them on their proper shelves with my own hands,—*though I do know a little Greek and geometry*, Mrs. L.!"

# CHAPTER IV:

## *RELIGION.*

## CHAPTER IV.

### Religion.

I do not think that any one not being a fanatic, can regret having been brought up as an Evangelical Christian. I do not include Calvinistic Christianity in this remark; for it must surely cloud all the years of mortal life to have received the first impressions of Time and Eternity through that dreadful, discoloured glass whereby the "Sun is turned into darkness and the moon into blood." I speak of the mild, devout, philanthropic Arminianism of the Clapham School, which prevailed amongst pious people in England and Ireland from the beginning of the century till the rise of the Oxford movement, and of which William Wilberforce and Lord Shaftesbury were successively representatives. To this school my parents belonged. The conversion of my father's grandmother by Lady Huntingdon, of which I have spoken, had, no doubt, directed his attention in early life to religion, but he was himself no Methodist, or Quietist, but a typical Churchman as Churchmen were in the first half of the century. All our relatives far and near, so far as I have ever heard, were the same. We had five archbishops and a bishop among our near kindred,—Cobbe, Beresfords, and Trenchs, great-grandfather, uncle, and cousins,—and (as I have narrated) my father's ablest brother, my god-father, was a clergyman. I was the first heretic ever known amongst us.

My earliest recollections include the lessons of both my father and mother in religion. I can almost feel myself now kneeling at my dear mother's knees repeating the Lord's Prayer after her clear sweet voice. Then came learning the

magnificent Collects, to be repeated to my father on Sunday mornings in his study; and later the church catechism and a great many hymns. Sunday was kept exceedingly strictly at Newbridge in those days; and no books were allowed except religious ones, nor any amusement, save a walk after church. Thus there was abundant time for reading the Bible and looking over the pictures in various large editions, and in Calmet's great folio *Dictionary*, beside listening to the sermon in church, and to another sermon which my father read in the evening to the assembled household. Of course, every day of the week there were Morning Prayers in the library,—and a "Short Discourse" from good, prosy old Jay, of Bath's "Exercises." In this way, altogether I received a good deal of direct religious instruction, beside very frequent reference to God and Duty and Heaven, in the ordinary talk of my parents with their children.

What was the result of this training? I can only suppose that my nature was a favourable soil for such seed, for it took root early and grew apace. I cannot recall any time when I could not have been described by any one who knew my little heart (I was very shy about it, and few, if any, did know it)—as a very religious child. Religious ideas were from the first intensely interesting and exciting to me. In great measure I fancy it was the element of the sublime in them which moved me first, just as I was moved by the thunder, and the storm and was wont to go out alone into the woods or into the long, solitary corridors to enjoy them more fully. I recollect being stirred to rapture by a little poem which I can repeat to this day, beginning:

Where is Thy dwelling place?
Is it in the realms of space,
By angels and just spirits only trod?
Or is it in the bright
And ever-burning light
Of the sun's flaming disk that Thou art throned, O God?

One of the stanzas suggested that the Divine seat might be in some region of the starry universe :

> "Far in the unmeasured, unimagined Heaven,
> So distant that its light
> Could never reach our sight
> Though with the speed of thought for endless ages driven."

Ideas like these used to make my cheek turn pale and lift me as if on wings ; and naturally Religion was the great storehouse of them. But I think, even in childhood, there was in me a good deal beside of the *moral*, if not yet the *spiritual* element of real Religion. Of course the great beauty and glory of Evangelical Christianity, its thorough amalgamation of the ideas of Duty and Devotion (elsewhere often so lamentably distinct), was very prominent in my parents' lessons. God was always to me the All-seeing Judge. His eye looking into my heart and beholding all its naughtiness and little duplicities (which of course I was taught to consider serious sins) was so familiar a conception that I might be said to live and move in the sense of it. Thus my life in childhood morally, was much the same as it is physically to live in a room full of sunlight. Later on, the evils which belong to this Evangelical training, the excessive self-introspection and self-consciousness, made themselves painfully felt, but in early years there was nothing that was not perfectly wholesome in the religion which I had so readily assimilated.

Further, I was, as I have said, a very happy child, even conscious of my own happiness ; and gratitude to God or man has always come to me as a sentiment enhancing my enjoyment of the good for which I have been thankful. Thus I was,—not conventionally merely,—but genuinely and spontaneously grateful to the Giver of all the pleasures which were poured on my head. I think I may say, that I *loved God*, when I was quite a young child. I can even remember

being dimly conscious that my good father and mother performed their religious exercises more *as a duty*,—whereas to me such things, so far as I could understand them, were real *pleasures;* like being taken to see somebody I loved. I have since recognised that both my parents were, in Evangelical parlance, "under the law;" while in my childish heart the germ of the mysterious New Life was already planted. I think my mother was aware of something of the kind and looked with a little wonder, blended with her tenderness at my violent outbursts of penitence, and at my strange fancy for reading the most serious books in my playhours. My brothers had not exhibited any such symptoms, but then they were healthy schoolboys, always engaged eagerly in their natural sports and pursuits; while I was a lonely, dreaming girl.

When I was seven years old, my father undertook to read the *Pilgrim's Progress* to my brothers, then aged from 12 to 18, and I was allowed to sit in the room and provided with a slate and sums. The sums, it appeared, were never worked, while my eyes were fixed in absorbed interest on the reader, evening after evening. Once or twice when the delightful old copy of Bunyan was left about after the lesson, my slate was covered with drawings of Apollyon and Great Heart which were pronounced "wonderful for the child." By the time Christian had come to the Dark River, all pretence of arithmetic was abandoned and I was permitted, proud and enchanted, to join the group of boys and listen with my whole soul to the marvellous tale. When the reading was over my father gave the volume (which had belonged to his grandmother) to me, for my "very own"; and I read it over and over continually for years, till the idea it is meant to convey,—Life a progress to Heaven—was engraved indelibly on my mind. It seems to me that few of those who have praised Bunyan most loudly have

recognized that he was not only a great religious genius, but a born poet, a *Puritan-Tinker-Shelley;* possessed of what is almost the highest gift of poetry, the sense of the analogy between outward nature and the human soul. He used allegory instead of metaphor, a clumsier vehicle by far, but it carried the same exquisite thoughts. I have the dear old book still, and it is one of my treasures with its ineffably quaint old woodcuts and its delicious marginal notes; as, for example, when "Giant Despair" is said to be unable one day to maul the pilgrims in his dungeon, because he had fits. "For sometimes," says Bunyan, "in sunshiny weather Giant Despair has fits." Could any one believe that this gem of poetical thought and deep experience is noted by the words in the margin, "*His Fits!*"? My father wrote on the fly-leaf of the blessed old book these still legible words:—

1830.

"This book, which belonged to my grandmother, was given as a present to my dear daughter Fanny upon witnessing her delight in reading it. May she keep the Celestial City steadfastly in view; may she surmount the dangers and trials she must meet with on the road; and, finally, be re-united with those she loved on earth in singing praises for ever and ever to Him who loved them and gave himself for them, is the fervent prayer of her affectionate father,

"CHARLES COBBE."

The notion of "getting to Heaven" by means of a faithful pilgrimage through this "Vale of Tears" was the prominent feature I think, always, in my father's religion, and naturally took great hold on me. When the day came whereon I began to doubt whether there were any Heaven to be reached, that moral earthquake, as was inevitable, shook not only my religion but my morality to their foundations; and my experience of the perils of those years, has made me ever since

anxious to base religion in every young mind, on ground liable to no such catastrophes. The danger came to me on this wise.

Up to my eleventh year, my little life inward and outward had flown in a bright and even current. Looking back at it and comparing my childhood with that of others I seem to have been—probably from the effects of solitude—*devout* beyond what was normal at my age. I used to spend a great deal of time secretly reading the Bible and that dullest of dull books *The Whole Duty of Man* (the latter a curious foretaste of my subsequent life-long interest in the study of ethics)—not exactly enjoying them but happy in the feeling that I was somehow approaching God. I used to keep awake at night to repeat various prayers and (wonderful to remember!) the Creed and Commandments! I made all sorts of severe rules for myself, and if I broke them, manfully mulcted myself of any little pleasures or endured some small self-imposed penance. Of none of these things had any one, even my dear mother, the remotest idea, except once when I felt driven like a veritable Cain, by my agonised conscience to go and confess to her that I had said in a recent rage (to myself) "*Curse them all!*" referring to my family in general and to my governess in particular! The tempest of my tears and sobs on this occasion evidently astonished her, and I remember lying exhausted on the floor in a recess in her bedroom, for a long time before I was able to move.

But the hour of doubt and difficulty was approaching. The first question which ever arose in my mind was concerning the miracle of the Loaves and Fishes. I can recall the scene vividly. It was a winter's night, my father was reading the Sunday evening Sermon in the dining-room. The servants, whose attendance was *de rigueur*, were seated in a row down the room. My father faced them, and my mother and I and my governess sat round the

fire near him. I was opposite the beautiful classic black marble mantelpiece, surmounted with an antique head of Jupiter Serapis (all photographed on my brain even now), and listening with all my might, as in duty bound, to the sermon which described the miracle of the Loaves and Fishes. "How did it happen exactly?" I began cheerfully to think, quite imagining I was doing the right thing to try to understand it all. "Well! first there were the fishes and the loaves. But what was done to them? Did the fish grow and grow as they were eaten and broken? And the bread the same? No! that is nonsense. And then the twelve basketsful taken up at the end, when there was not nearly so much at the beginning. It is not possible!" "O! Heavens! (was the next thought) *I am doubting the Bible!* God forgive me! I must never think of it again."

But the little rift had begun, and as time went on other difficulties arose. Nothing very seriously, however, distracted my faith or altered the intensity of my religious feelings for the next two years, till in October, 1836, I was sent to school as I have narrated in the last chapter, at Brighton and a new description of life opened. At school I came under influence of two kinds. One was the preaching of the Evangelical Mr. Vaughan, in whose church (Christ Church) were our seats; and I recall vividly the emotion with which one winter's night I listened to his sermon on the great theme, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as wool." The sense of "the exceeding sinfulness of sin," the rapturous joy of purification therefrom, came home to me, and as I walked back to school with the waves thundering up the Brighton beach beside us and the wind tossing the clouds in the evening sky overhead, the whole tremendous realities of the moral life seemed borne in on my heart. On the other hand, the perpetual overstrain of school-work, and unjust blame and penalty for failure to do what it

was impossible to accomplish in the given time, drove me to all sorts of faults for which I hated and despised myself. When I knelt by my bed at night, after the schoolfellow who shared my room was, as I fancied, asleep, she would get up and pound my head with a bolster, laughing and crying out, "Get up, you horrid hypocrite; get up! I'll go on beating you till you do!" It was not strange if, under such circumstances, my beautiful childish religion fell into abeyance and my conscience into disquietude. But, as I have narrated, I came home at sixteen, and then, once more able to enjoy the solitude of the woods and of my own bedroom and its inner study where no one intruded, the old feelings, tinged with deep remorse for the failures of my school-life and for many present faults (amongst others a very bitter and unforgiving temper) come back with fresh vigour. I have always considered that in that summer in my seventeenth year I went through what Evangelical Christians call "conversion." Religion became the supreme interest of life; and the sense that I was pardoned its greatest joy. I was, of course, a Christian of the usual Protestant type, finding infinite pleasure in the simple old "Communion" of those pre-ritualistic days, and in endless Bible readings to myself. Sometimes I rose in the early summer dawn and read a whole Gospel before I dressed. I think I never ran up into my room in the daytime for any change of attire without glancing into the book and carrying away some echo of what I believed to be "God's Word." Nobody knew anything about all this, of course; but as time went on there were great and terrible perturbations in my inner life, and these perhaps I did not always succeed in concealing from the watchful eyes of my dear mother.

So far as I can recall, the ideas of Christ and of God the Father, were for all practical religious purposes identified in my young mind. It was as God upon earth,—the Redeemer

God, that I worshipped Jesus. To be pardoned through his "atonement" and at death to enter Heaven, were the religious objects of life. But a new and most disturbing element here entered my thoughts. How did anybody know all that story of Galilee to be true? How could we believe the miracles? I have read very carefully Gibbon's XV. and XVI. chapters, and other books enough to teach me that everything in historical Christianity had been questioned; and my own awakening critical, and reasoning, and above all, ethical,—faculties supplied fresh crops of doubts of the truth of the story and of the morality of much of the Old Testament history, and of the scheme of Atonement itself.

Then ensued four years on which I look back as pitiful in the extreme. In complete mental solitude and great ignorance, I found myself facing all the dread problems of human existence. For a long time my intense desire to remain a Christian predominated, and brought me back from each return to scepticism in a passion of repentance and prayer to Christ to take my life or my reason sooner than allow me to stray from his fold. In those days no such thing was heard of as "Broad" interpretations of Scripture doctrines. We were fifty years before *Lux Mundi* and thirty before even *Essays and Reviews*. To be a "Christian," then, was to believe implicitly in the verbal inspiration of every word of the Bible, and to adore Christ as "very God of very God." With such implicit belief it was permitted to hope we might, by a good life and through Christ's Atonement, attain after death to Heaven. Without the faith or the good life, it was certain we should go to hell. It was taught us all that to be good only from fear of Hell was not the highest motive; the *highest* motive was the hope of Heaven! Had anything like modern rationalising theories of the Atonement, or modern expositions of the Bible stories, or finally modern loftier doctrines of

disinterested morality and religion, been known to me at this crisis of my life, it is possible that the whole course of my spiritual history would have been different. But of all such "raising up the astral spirits of dead creeds," as Carlyle called it, or as Broad churchmen say, "Liberating the kernel of Christianity from the husk," I knew, and could know nothing. Evangelical Christianity in 1840 presented itself as a thing to be taken whole, or rejected wholly; and for years the alternations went on in my poor young heart and brain, one week or month of rational and moral disbelief, and the next of vehement, remorseful return to the faith which I supposed could alone give me the joy of religion. As time went on, and my reading supplied me with a little more knowledge and my doubts deepened and accumulated, the returns to Christian faith grew fewer and shorter, and, as I had no idea of the possibility of reaching any other vital religion, I saw all that had made to me the supreme joy and glory of life fade out of it, while that motive which had been presented to me as the mainspring of duty and curb of passion, namely, the Hope of Heaven, vanished as a dream. I always had, as I have described, somewhat of that *mal-du-ciel* which Lamartine talks of, that longing, as from the very depths of our being for an Eden of Divine eternal love. I could scarcely in those days read even such poor stuff as the song of the Peri in Moore's *Lalla Rookh* (not to speak of Bunyan's vision of the Celestial City) without tears rushing to my eyes. But this, I saw, must all go with the rest. If, as Clough was saying, all unknown to me, about that same time,—

> "Christ is not risen, no!
> He lies and moulders low."

If all the Christian revelation were a mass of mistakes and errors, no firmer ground on which to build than the promises

of Mahomet, or of Buddha, or of the Old Man of the Mountain,—of course there was (so far as I saw) no reason left for believing in any Heaven at all, or any life after death. Neither had the Moral Law, which had come to me through that supposed revelation on Sinai and the Mount of Galilee, any claim to my obedience other than might be made out by identifying it with principles common to heathen and Christian alike; an identity of which, at that epoch, I had as yet only the vaguest ideas. In short my poor young soul was in a fearful dilemma. On the one hand I had the choice to accept a whole mass of dogmas against which my reason and conscience rebelled; on the other, to abandon those dogmas and strive no more to believe the incredible, or to revere what I instinctively condemned; and then, as a necessary sequel, to cast aside the laws of Duty which I had hitherto cherished; to cease to pray or take the sacrament; and to relinquish the hope of a life beyond the grave.

It was not very wonderful if, as I think I can recall, my disposition underwent a considerable change for the worse while all these tremendous questions were being debated in my solitary walks in the woods and by the seashore, and in my room at night over my Gibbon or my Bible. I know I was often bitter and morose and selfish; and then came the alternate spell of paroxysms of self-reproach and fanciful self-tormentings.

The life of a young woman in such a home as mine is so guarded round on every side and the instincts of a girl are so healthy, that the dangers incurred even in such a spiritual landslip as I have described are very limited compared to what they must inevitably be in the case of young men or of women less happily circumstanced. It has been my profound sense of the awful perils of such a downfall of faith as I experienced, the peril of moral shipwreck without compass or anchorage amid the tempests of youth, which

has spurred me ever since to strive to forestall for others the hour of danger.

At last my efforts to believe in orthodox Christianity ceased altogether. In the summer after my twentieth birthday I had reached the end of the long struggle. The complete downfall of Evangelicalism,—which seems to have been effected in George Eliot's strong brain in a single fortnight of intercourse with Mr. and Mrs. Bray,—had taken in my case four long years of miserable mental conflict and unspeakable pain. It left me with something as nearly like a *Tabula rasa* of faith as can well be imagined. I definitely disbelieved in human immortality and in a supernatural revelation. The existence of God I neither denied nor affirmed. I felt I had no means of coming to any knowledge of Him. I was, in fact (long before the word was invented), precisely—an Agnostic.

One day, while thus literally creedless, I wandered out alone as was my wont into a part of our park a little more wild than the rest, where deer were formerly kept and sat down among the rocks and the gorse which was then in its summer glory of odorous blossoms, ever since rich to me with memories of that hour. It was a sunny day in May, and after reading a little of my favourite Shelley, I fell, as often happened, into mournful thought I was profoundly miserable; profoundly conscious of the deterioration and sliding down of all my feelings and conduct from the high ambitions of righteousness and holiness which had been mine in the days of my Christian faith and prayer; and at the same time I knew that the whole scaffolding of that higher life had fallen to pieces and could never be built up again. While I was thus musing despairingly, something stirred within me, and I asked myself, "Can I not rise once more, conquer my faults, and live up to my own idea of what is right and good? Even though there be no life after death, I

may yet deserve my own respect here and now, and, if there be a God, He must approve me."

The resolution was made very seriously. I came home to begin a new course and to cultivate a different spirit. Was it strange that in a few days I began instinctively, and almost without reflection, to pray again? No longer did I make any kind of effort to believe this thing or the other about God. I simply addressed Him as the Lord of conscience, whom I implored to strengthen my good resolutions, to forgive my faults, "to lift me out of the mire and clay and set my feet upon a rock and order my goings." Of course, there was Christian sentiment and the results of Christian training in all I felt and did. I could no more have cast them off than I could have leaped off my shadow. But of dogmatical Christianity there was never any more. I have never from that time, now more than fifty years ago, attached, or wished I could attach, credence to any part of what Dr. Martineau has called the *Apocalyptic side of Christianity*, nor (I may add with thankfulness) have I ever lost faith in God.

The storms of my youth were over. Henceforth through many years there was a progressive advance to Theism as I have attempted to describe it in my books; and there were many, many hard moral fights with various Apollyons all along the road; but no more spiritual revolutions.

About thirty years after that day, to me so memorable, I read in Mr. Stopford Brooke's *Life of Robertson*, these words which seem truly to tell my own story and which I believe recorded Robertson's own experience, a little while later:

"It is an awful moment when the soul begins to find that the props on which it blindly rested are many of them rotten . . . . I know but one way in which a man can come forth from this agony scatheless: it is by holding fast to those things which are certain still. In the darkest hour

through which a human soul can pass, whatever else is doubtful, this at least is certain. If there be no God and no future state, even then *it is better to be generous than selfish, better to be true than false, better to be brave than a coward.* Blessed beyond all earthly blessedness is the man who in the tempestuous darkness of the soul has dared to hold fast to these landmarks. I appeal to the recollection of any man who has passed through that agony and stood upon the rock at last, with a faith and hope and trust no longer traditional but his own."

It may be asked, "What was my creed for those first years of what I may call *indigenous* religion? Naturally, with no better guide than the inductive philosophy of Locke and Bacon, I could have no outlook beyond the Deism of the last century. Miracles and miraculous inspiration being formally given up, there remained only (as I supposed) as testimony to the existence and character of God such inductions as were drawn in *Paley's Theology* and the *Bridgwater Treatises;* with all of which I was very familiar. Voltaire's "*Dieu Tout-puissant, Remunerateur Vengeur,*" the God whose garb (as Goethe says,) is woven in "Nature's roaring loom"; the Beneficent Creator, from whom came all the blessings which filled my cup; these were the outlines of Deity for me for the time. The theoretical connection between such a God and my own duty I had yet to work out through much hard study, but fortunately moral instinct was practically sufficient to identify them; nay, it was, as I have just narrated, *through* such moral instincts that I was led back straight to religion, and began to pray to my Maker as my Moral Lord, so soon as ever I strove in earnest to obey my conscience.

There was nothing in such simple Deism to warrant a belief in a future life, and I deliberately trained myself to abandon a hope which was always very dear to me. As regards Christ, there was inevitably, at first, some reaction

in my mind from the worship of my Christian days. I almost felt I had been led into idolatry, and I bitterly resented then (and ever since) the paramount prominence, the genuflexions at the creed, and the especially reverential voice and language applied constantly by Christians to the Son, rather than to the Father. But after I had read F. W. Newman's book of the *Soul*, I recognised, with relief, how many of the phenomena of the spiritual life which Christians are wont to treat as exclusively bound up with their creed are, in truth, phases of the natural history of all devout spirits; and my longing has ever since been rather to find grounds of sympathy with believers in Christ and for union with them on the broadest bases of common gratitude, penitence, restoration and adoration, rather than to accentuate our differences. The view which I eventually reached of Christ as an historical human character, is set forth at large in my *Broken Lights*. He was, I think, the man whose life was to the life of Humanity what Regeneration is to the individual soul.

I may here conclude the story of my religious life extending through the years after the above described momentous change. After a time, occupied in part with study and with efforts to be useful to our poor neighbours and to my parents, my Deism was lifted to a higher plane by one of those inflowings of truth which seem the simplest things in the world, but are as rain on the dry ground in summer to the mind which receives them. One day while praying quietly, the thought came to me with extraordinary lucidity: "God's Goodness is what *I mean* by Goodness! It is not a mere title, like the 'Majesty' of a King. He has really that character which we call 'Good.' He is Just, as I understand Justice, only more perfectly just. He is Good as I understand Goodness, only more perfectly good. He is not good in time and tremendous in eternity; not good to some of His creatures and cruel to others, but wholly, eternally,

universally good. If I could know and understand all His acts from eternity, there would not be one which would not deepen my reverence and call forth my adoring praise."

To some readers this discovery may seem a mere platitude and truism: the assertion of a thing which they have never failed to understand. To me it was a real revelation which transformed my religion from one of reverence only into one of vivid love for that Infinite Goodness which I then beheld unclouded. The deep shadow left for years on my soul by the doctrine of eternal Hell had rolled away at last. Another truth came home to me many years later, and not till after I had written my first book. It was one night, after sitting up late in my room reading (for once) no grave work, but a pretty little story by Mrs. Gaskell. Up to that time I had found the pleasures of knowledge the keenest of all, and gloried in the old philosopher's *dictum*, "Man was created to know and to contemplate." I looked on the pleasures of the affections as secondary and inferior to those of the intellect, and I strove to perform my duties to those around me, rather in a spirit of moral rectitude and obedience to law than in one of loving-kindness. Suddenly again it came to me to see that Love is greater than Knowledge; that it is more beautiful to serve our brothers freely and tenderly, than to "hive up learning with each studious year," to compassionate the failures of others and ignore them when possible, rather than undertake the hard process (I always found it so!) of forgiveness of injuries; to say, "What may I be allowed to do to help and bless this one—or that?" rather than "What am I bound by duty to do for him, or her; and how little will suffice?" As these thoughts swelled in my heart, I threw myself down in a passion of happy tears, and passed most of the night thinking how I should work out what I had learned. I had scarcely fallen asleep towards morning when I was waked by the intelligence that one of the servants, a young laundress, was

dying. I hurried to the poor woman's room which was at a great distance from mine, and found all the men and women servants collected round her. She wished for some one to pray for her, and there was no one to do it but myself, and so, while the innocent girl's soul passed away, I led, for the first and only time, the prayers of my father's household.

I had read a good number of books by Deists during the preceding years. Gibbon's Miscellaneous Works (which I greatly admired), Hume, Tindal, Collins, Voltaire, beside as many of the old heathen moralists and philosophers as I could reach; Marcus Aurelius, Seneca, Epictetus, Plutarch's *Moralia*, Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, and a little of Plato. But of any modern book touching on the particular questions which had tortured me I knew nothing till, by the merest good fortune, I fell in with *Blanco White's Life*. How much comfort and help I found in his *Meditations* the reader may guess. Curiously enough, long years afterwards, Bishop Colenso told me that the same book, falling into his hands in Natal by the singular chance of a colonist possessing the volumes, had determined him to come over to England and bring out his *Pentateuch*. Thus poor Blanco White, after all prophesied rightly when he said that he was "one of those who, falling in the ditch, help other men to pass over"!

Another book some years later was very helpful to me—F. W. Newman's *Soul*. Dean Stanley told me that he thought in the far future that single book would be held to outweigh in value all that the author's brother, Cardinal Newman, had ever written. I entered not long after into correspondence with Professor Newman, and have had the pleasure of calling him my friend ever since. We have interchanged letters, or at least friendly greetings, at short intervals now for nearly fifty years.

But the epoch-making book for me was Theodore Parker's *Discourse of Religion*. Reading a notice of it in the *Athenæum*,

soon after its publication (somewhere about the year 1845), I sent for it, and words fail to tell the satisfaction and encouragement it gave me. One must have been isolated and care-laden as I to estimate the value of such a book. I had come, as I have narrated above, to the main conclusions of Parker,—namely, the absolute goodness of God and the non-veracity of popular Christianity,—three years before; so that it has been a mistake into which some of my friends have fallen when they have described me as converted from orthodoxy by Parker. But his book threw a flood of light on my difficult way. It was, in the first place, infinitely satisfactory to find the ideas which I had hammered out painfully and often imperfectly, at last welded together, set forth in lucid order, supported by apparently adequate erudition and heart-warmed by fervent piety. But, in the second place, the *Discourse* helped me most importantly by teaching me to regard Divine Inspiration no longer as a miraculous and therefore incredible thing; but as normal, and in accordance with the natural relations of the infinite and finite spirit; a Divine inflowing of *mental* Light precisely analogous to that *moral* influence which divines call Grace. As every devout and obedient soul may expect to share in Divine Grace, so the devout and obedient souls of all the ages have shared (as Parker taught) in Divine Inspiration. And, as the reception of Grace, even in large measure, does not render us *impeccable*, so neither does the reception of Inspiration make us *Infallible*. It is at this point that Deism stops and Theism begins; namely, when our faith transcends all that can be gleaned from the testimony of the bodily senses and accepts as supremely trustworthy the direct Divine teaching, the "original revelation" of God's holiness and love in the depths of the soul. Theodore Parker adopted the alternative synonym to mark the vital difference in the philosophy which underlies the two creeds; a theoretic difference leading to most important

practical consequences in the whole temper and spirit of Theism as distinct from Deism. I saw all this clearly ere long, and ranged myself thenceforth as a THEIST; a name now familiar to everybody, but which, when my family came to know I took it, led them to tell me with some contempt that it was "a word in a Dictionary, not a Religion."

A few months after I had absorbed Parker's *Discourse*, the great sorrow of my life befell me. My mother, whose health had been feeble ever since I could remember her, and who was now seventy years of age, passed away from a world which has surely held few spirits so pure and sweet. She died with her weeping husband and sons beside her bed and with her head resting on my breast. Almost her last words were to tell me I had been "the pride and joy" of her life. The agony I suffered when I realised that she was gone I shall not try to tell. She was the one being in the world whom I truly loved through all the passionate years of youth and early womanhood; the only one who really loved me. Never one word of anger or bitterness had passed from her lips to me, nor (thank God!) from mine to her in the twenty-four years in which she blessed my life; and for the latter part of that time her physical weakness had drawn a thousand tender cares of mine around her. No relationship in all the world, I think, can ever be so perfect as that of mother and daughter under such circumstances, when the strength of youth becomes the support of age, and the sweet dependance of childhood is reversed.

But it was all over—I was alone; no more motherly love and tenderness were ever again to reach my thirsting heart. But this was not as I recall it, the worst pang in that dreadful agony. I had (as I said above) ceased to believe in a future life, and therefore I had no choice but to think that that most beautiful soul which was worth all the kingdoms of earth had actually *ceased to be*. She was a "Memory;" nothing more.

I was not then or at any time one of those fortunate people who can suddenly cast aside the conclusions which they have reached by careful intellectual processes, and leap to opposite opinions at the call of sentiment. I played no tricks with my convictions, but strove as best I could to endure the awful strain, and to recognise the Divine Justice and Goodness through the darkness of death. I need not and cannot say more on the subject.

Happily for me, there were many duties waiting for me, and I could recognise even then that, though *pleasure* seemed gone for ever, yet it was a relief to feel I had still *duties*. "Something to do for others" was an assuagement of misery. My father claimed first and much attention, and the position I now held of the female head of the family and household gave me a good deal of employment. To this I added teaching in my village school a mile from our house two or three times a week, and looking after all the sick and hungry in the two villages of Donabate and Balisk. Those were the years of Famine and Fever in Ireland, and there was abundant call for all our energies to combat them. I shall write of these matters in the next chapter.

I had, though with pain, kept my heresies secret during my mother's declining years and till my father had somewhat recovered from his sorrow. I had continued to attend family prayers and church services, with the exception of the Communion, and had only vaguely allowed it to be understood that I was not in harmony with them all. When my poor father learned the full extent of my "infidelity," it was a terrible blow to him, for which I have, in later years, sincerely pitied him. He could not trust himself to speak to me, but though I was in his house, he wrote to tell me I had better go away. My second brother, a barrister, had a year before given up his house in Queen Anne Street under a terrible affliction, and had gone, broken-hearted,

to live on a farm which he hired in the wilds of Donegal. There I went as my father desired and remained for nearly a year; not knowing whether I should ever be permitted to return home and rather expecting to be disinherited. He wrote to me two or three times and said that if my doubts only extended in certain directions he could bear with them, "but if I rejected Christ and disbelieved the Bible, a man was called upon to keep the plague of such opinions from his own house." Then he required me to answer him on those points categorically. Of course I did so plainly, and told him I did *not* believe that Christ was God; and I did *not* (in his sense) believe in the inspiration or authority of the Bible. After this ensued a very long silence, in which I remained entirely ignorant of my destiny and braced myself to think of earning my future livelihood. I was absolutely lonely; my brother, though always very kind to me, had not the least sympathy with my heresies, and thought my father's conduct (as I do) quite natural; and I had not a friend or relative from whom I could look for any sort of comfort. A young cousin to whom I had spoken of them freely, and who had, in a way, adopted my ideas, wrote to me to say she had been shown the error of them, and was shocked to think she had been so misguided. This was the last straw. After I received this letter I wandered out in the dusk as usual down to a favourite nook—a natural seat under the bank in a bend of the river which ran through Bonny Glen,—and buried my face in the grass. As I did so my lips touched a primrose which had blossomed in that precise spot since I had last been there, and the soft, sweet flower which I had in childhood chosen for my mother's birthday garland seemed actually to kiss my face. No one who has not experienced *utter* loneliness can perhaps quite imagine how much comfort such an incident can bring.

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As I had no duties in Donegal, and seldom saw our few neighbours, I occupied myself, often for seven or eight or even nine hours a day, in writing an *Essay on True Religion*. I possess this MSS. still, and have been lately examining it. Of course, as a first literary effort, it has many faults, and my limited opportunities for reference render parts of it very incomplete; but it is not a bad piece of work. The first part is employed in setting forth my reasons for belief in God. The second, those for not believing in (the apocalyptic part of) Christianity. The chapters on *Miracles* and Prophesy (written from the literal and matter-of-fact standpoint of that epoch) are not ill-done, while the moral failures of the Bible and of the orthodox theology, the histories of Jacob, Jael, David, &c., and the dogmas of Original Sin, the Atonement, a Devil and eternal Hell, are criticized pretty successfully. A considerable part of the book consists in a comparison in parallel columns of moral precepts from the Old and New Testaments on one side, and from non-Christian writers, Euripides, Socrates (Xenophon), Plutarch, Sextius, Marcus Aurelius, Epictetus, Seneca, the Zend Avesta (Anquetil du Perron's), The Institutes of Menu (Sir W. Jones'), the Dammapadan, the Talmud, &c., on the other. For years I had seized every opportunity of collecting the most striking ethical *dicta*, and I thus marshalled them to what appeared to me good purpose, namely, the disproof of the originality or exceptional loftiness of Christian Morals. I did not apprehend till later years, how the supreme achievement of Christianity was not the inculcation of a *new*, still less of a *systematic* Morality; but the introduction of a new spirit into Morality; as Christ himself said, a leaven into the lump.

Reading Parker's *Discourse*, as I did very naturally in my solitude once again, it occurred to me to write to him and ask him to tell me on what ground he based the faith which I perceived he held, in a life after death? It had seemed to me

that the guarantee of Revelation having proved worthless, there remained no sufficient reason for hope to counter-weigh the obvious difficulty of conceiving of a survival of the soul. Parker answered me in a most kind letter, accompanied by his *Sermon of the Immortal Life*. Of course I studied this with utmost care and sympathy, and by slow, very slow degrees, as I came more to take in the full scope of the Theistic, as distinguished from the Deistic view, I saw my way to a renewal of *the Hope of the Human Race* which, twenty years later, I set forth as best I could in the little book of that name. I learned to trust the intuition of Immortality which is "written in the heart of man by a Hand which writes no falsehoods." I deemed also that I could see (as Parker says) the evidence of "a summer yet to be in the buds which lie folded through our northern winter;" the presence in human nature of many efflorescences—and they the fairest of all—quite unaccountable and unmeaning on the hypothesis that the end of man is in the grave. In later years I think, as the gloom of the evil and cruelty of the world has shrouded more the almost cloudless skies of my youth, I have most fervently held by the doctrine of Immortality because it is, to me *the indispensable corollary of that of the Goodness of God*. I am not afraid to repeat the words, which so deeply shocked, when they were first published, my old friend, F. W. Newman. "*If Man be not immortal, God is not Just.*"

Recovering this faith, as I may say, rationally and not by any gust of emotion, I had the inexpressible happiness of thinking henceforth of my mother as still existing in God's universe, and (as well I knew) loving me wherever she might be, and under whatever loftier condition of being. To meet her again "spirit to spirit, ghost to ghost," has been to me for forty years, the sweetest thought connected with death. Ere long, now, it must be realised.

After nine or ten months of this, by no means harsh, exile, my father summoned me to return home. I resumed my place as his daughter in doing all I could for his comfort, and as the head of his house; merely thenceforth abstaining from attendance either at Church or at family prayer. I had several favourite nooks and huts near and far in the woods, which I made into little Oratories for myself, and to one or other of them I resorted almost every evening at dusk; making it a habit—not broken for many years afterwards, to repeat a certain versified Litany of Thanksgiving which I had written and read to my mother. On Sundays, when the rest of the family went to the village church, I had the old garden for a beautiful cathedral. Having let myself in with my own key and locked the doors, I knew I had the lovely six acres within the high walls, free for hours from all observation or intrusion. How much difference it makes in life to have at command such peace and solitude it is hard to estimate. I look back to some of the summer forenoons spent alone in that garden as to the flowering time of my seventy years. God grant that the afterglow of such hours may remain with me to the last, and that "at eventide it may be light!"

I knew that there were Unitarian chapels in Dublin at this time, and much wished to attend them now and then; but I would not cause annoyance to my father by the notice which my journey to the town on a Sunday would have attracted. Only on New Year's Day I thought I might go unobserved and interpolate attendance at the service among my usual engagements. I went accordingly to Dublin one 1st of January and drove to the chapel of which I had heard in Eustace Street. It was a big, dreary place with scarcely a quarter of the seats occupied, and a middle-class congregation apparently very cool and indifferent. The service was a miserable hybrid affair.

neither Christian as I understood Christianity, nor yet Theistic; but it was a pleasure to me merely to stand and kneel with other people at the hymns and prayers. At last, the sermon, for which I might almost say, I was hungry, arrived. The old Minister in his black-gown ascended the pulpit, having taken with him—what?—could I believe my eyes? It was an *old printed book*, bound in the blue and drab old fuzzy paper of the year 1810 or thereabouts, and out of this he proceeded to read an erudite discourse by some father of English Socinianism, on the precise value of the Greek article when used before the word θεός! My disappointment not to say disgust were such that,—as it was easy from my seat to leave the place without disturbing anyone,—I escaped into the street, never (it may be believed) to repeat my experiment.

It was an anomalous position that which I held at Newbridge from the time of my return from Donegal, till my father's death eight years later. I took my place as head of the household at the family table and in welcoming our guests, but I was all the time in a sort of moral Coventry, under a vague atmosphere of disapprobation wherein all I said was listened to cautiously as likely to conceal some poisonous heresy. Everything of this kind, however, wears down and becomes easier and softer as time goes on, and most so when people are, *au fond*, just-minded and good-hearted; and the years during which I remained at home till my father's death, though mentally very lonely, were far from unhappy. In particular, the perfect clearness and straightforwardness of my position was, and has ever since been, a source of strength and satisfaction to me, for which I have thanked God a thousand times. My inner life was made happy by my simple faith in God's infinite and perfect love; and I never had any doubt whether I had erred in abandoning the creed of my youth. On the contrary, as

the whole tendency of modern science and criticism showed itself stronger and stronger against the old orthodoxy, my hopes were unduly raised of a not distant New Reformation which I might even live to see. These sanguine hopes have faded. As Dean Stanley seems to have felt, there was, somewhere between the years '74 and '78, a turn in the tide of men's thoughts (due, I think, to the paramount influence and insolence which physical science then assumed), which has postponed any decisive "broad" movement for years beyond my possible span of life. But though nothing appears quite so bright to my old eyes as all things did to me in youth, though familiarity with human wickedness and misery, and still more with the horrors of scientific cruelty to animals, have strained my faith in God's justice sometimes even to agony,—I know that no form of religious creed could have helped me any more than my own or as much as it has done to bear the brunt of such trial; and I remain to the present unshaken both in respect to the denials and the affirmations of Theism. There are great difficulties, soul-torturing difficulties besetting it; but the same or worse, beset every other form of faith in God; and infinitely more, and to my mind insurmountable ones, beset Atheism.

For fifty years Theism has been my staff of life. I must soon try how it will support me down the last few steps of my earthly way. I believe it will do so well.

# CHAPTER V.

## *MY FIRST BOOK.*

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### My First Book.

When I was thirty years of age I had an attack of bronchitis from which I nearly died. When very ill and not expecting to recover I reflected that while my own life had been made happy and strong by the faith which had been given to me, I had done nothing to help any other human soul to find that solution of the dread problem which had brought such peace to me. I felt, as Mrs. Browning says, that a Truth was "like bread at Sacrament" to be passed on. When, unexpectedly to myself, I slowly recovered after a sojourn in Devonshire, I resolved to set about writing something which should convey as much as possible of my own convictions to whosoever should read it. For a time I thought of enlarging and completing my MS. *Essay on True Religion*, written for my own instruction; but the more I reflected the less I cared to labour to pull down hastily the crumbling walls which yet sheltered millions of souls, and the more I longed to build up anew on solid base a strong-hold of refuge for those driven like myself from the old ground of faith in God and Duty. Especially I felt that as the worst dangers of such transitions lay in the sudden snapping of the supposed bond of Morality, and collapse of the hopes of heaven and terrors of hell which had been used as motives of virtue and deterrents from vice; so the most urgent need lay in the direction of a system of ethics which should base Duty on ground absolutely apart from that of the supposed supernatural revelation and supply sanctions and motives unconnected therewith. As it happened at this very time, my good (orthodox) friend, Miss Felicia Skene, had

recommended me to read Kant's *Metaphysic of Ethics*, and I had procured Semple's translation and found it almost dazzlingly enlightening to my mind. It would be presumptuous for me to say that then, or at any time, I have thoroughly mastered either this book or the *Reinen Vernunft* of this greatest of thinkers; but, so far as I have been able to do so, I can say for my own individual mind (as his German disciples were wont to do for themselves), "God said, Let there be Light! and there was—the Kantian Philosophy." It has been, and no doubt will be still further, modified by succeeding metaphysicians and sometimes it may appear to have been superseded, but I cannot think otherwise than that Kant was and will finally be recognised to have been the Newton of the laws of Mind.

I shall now endeavour to explain the purpose of my first book (which is also my *magnum opus*) by quoting the Preface at some length; and, as the third edition has long been out of print and is unattainable in England or America, I shall permit myself to embody in this chapter a general account of the drift of it, with extracts sufficient to serve as samples of the whole. Looking over it now, after the lapse of just forty years, I can see that my reading at that time had lain so much among old books that the style is almost that of a didactic Treatise of the seventeenth century; and the ideas, likewise, are necessarily exclusively those of the pre-Darwinian Era. Conceptions so familiar to us now as that of an "hereditary set of the brain," and of the "Capitalised experience of the tribe," were then utterly unthought of. I have been well aware that it would, consequently, have been necessary,—had the book been republished any time during the last twenty years,—to rewrite much of it and define the standpoint of an Intuitionist as regards the theory of Evolution in its bearing on the foundation of

ethics. For this task, however, I have always lacked leisure; and my article on "*Darwinism in Morals*" (reprinted in the book of that name) has been the best effort I have made in such direction. I may here, perhaps, nevertheless be allowed to say as a last word in favour of this Essay, namely, that such as it is, it has served me, personally, as a scaffolding for all my life-work, a key to open most of the locks which might have barred my way. If now I feel (as men and women are wont to do at three-score years and ten), that I hold all philosophic opinions with less tenacious grasp, less "cocksureness" than in earlier days, and know that the great realities to which they led, will remain realities for me still should those opinions prove here and there unstable,—it is not that I am disposed in any way to abandon them, still less that I have found any other systems of ethics or theology more, or equally, sound and self-consistent.

I wrote the "*Essay on the Theory of Intuitive Morals*" between my thirtieth and thirty-third years. I had a great deal else to do—to amuse and help my father (then growing old); to direct our household, entertain our guests, carry on the feminine correspondence of the family, teach in my village school twice a week or so, and to attend every case of illness or other tribulation in Donabate and Balisk. My leisure for writing and for the preliminary reading for writing, was principally at night or in the early morning; and at last it was accomplished. No one but my dear old friend, Harriet St. Leger, had seen any part of the MS., and, as I have said, nobody belonging to my family had ever (so far as I know) employed a printer or publisher before. I took the MS. with me to London, where my father and I were fortunately going for a holiday, and called with it in Paternoster Row, on Mr. William Longman, to whom I had a letter of business introduction from my Dublin

bookseller. When I opened my affair to Mr. Longman, it was truly a case of Byron's address to Murray—

> "To thee with hope and terror dumb,
> The unfledged MS. authors come;
> Thou printest all, and sellest some,
> My Murray!"

Mr. Longman politely veiled a smile, and adopted the voice of friendly dissuasion from my enterprise, looking no doubt on a young lady (as I still was) as a very unpromising author for a treatise on Kantian ethics! My spirit, however, rose with the challenge. I poured out for some minutes much that I had been thinking over for years, and as I paused at last, Mr. Longman said briefly, but decidedly, "*I'll publish your book.*"

After this fateful interview, I remember going into St. Paul's and sitting there a long while alone.

The sheets of the book passed rapidly through the press, and I usually took them to the British Museum to verify quotations and work quietly over difficulties, for in the house which we occupied in Connaught Square I had no study to myself. The foot-notes to the book (collected some in the Museum, some from my own books and some from old works in Archbishop Marsh's Library) were themselves a heavy part of the work. Glancing over the pages as I write, I see extracts, for example, from the following:—Cudworth (I had got at some inedited MSS. of his in the British Museum), Montesquieu, Philo, Hooker, Proclus, Thomas Aquinas, Aristotle, Descartes, Müller, Whewell, Mozley, Leibnitz, St. Augustine, Phillipsohn, Strabo, St. Chrysostom, Morell, Lewes, Dugald Stewart, Mill, Oërsted, the Adée-Grunt'h (sacred book of the Sikhs), Herbert Spencer, Hume, Maximus Tyriensis, Institutes of Menu, Victor Cousin, Sir William Hamilton, Lucian, Seneca, Cory's Fragments,

St. Gregory the Great, Justin Martyr, Jeremy Taylor, the Yajur Veda, Shaftesbury, Plato, Marcus Aurelius, Diogenes Laertius, Cicero, Confucius, and many more. There are also in the Notes sketches of the history of the doctrines of Predestination, and of Original Sin, which involved very considerable research.

At last the proofs were corrected, the Notes verified, and the time had come when the Preface must be written! How was I to find a quiet hour to compose it? Like most women I was bound hand and foot by a fine web of little duties and attentions, which men never feel or brush aside remorselessly, (it was only Hooker, who rocked a cradle with his foot while he wrote the Ecclesiastical Polity!); and it was a serious question for me when I could find leisure and solitude. Luckily, just on the critical day, my father was seized with a fancy to go to the play, and, equally luckily, I had so bad a cold that it was out of question that I should, as usual, accompany him. Accordingly I had an evening all alone, and wrote fast and hard the pages which I shall presently quote, finishing the last sentence of my *Preface* as I heard my father's knock at the hall-door.

I had all along told my father (though, alas! to his displeasure), that I was going to publish a book; of course, anonymously, to save him annoyance. When the printing was completed, the torn and defaced sheets of the MSS. lay together in a heap for removal by the housemaid. Pointing to this, my poor father said solemnly to me: "Don't leave those about; *you don't know into whose hands they may fall.*" It was needless to observe to him, that I was on the point of *publishing* the "perilous stuff"!

The book was brought out by Longmans that year (1855), and afterwards by Crosby and Nichols in Boston, and again by Trübner in London. It was reviewed rather largely and, on the whole, very kindly, considering it was by an

unknown and altogether unfriended author; but sometimes also in a manner which it is pleasant to know has gone out of fashion in these latter days. It was amusing to see that not one of my critics had a suspicion they were dealing with a woman's work. They all said, "*He* reasons clearly." "*His* spirit and manner are particularly well suited to ethical discussion." "*His* treatment of morals" (said the *Guardian*) "is often both true and beautiful." "It is a most noble performance," (said the *Caledonian Mercury*), "the work of a *masculine* and lofty mind." "It is impossible," (said the *Scotsman*), "to deny the ability of the writer or not to admire *his* high moral tone, his earnestness and the fulness of his knowledge." But the heresy of the book brought down heavy denunciation from the "religious" papers on the audacious writer who, "instead of walking softly and humbly on the firm ground and taking the Word of God as a lamp," &c., had indulged in "insect reasonings." A rumour at last went out that a woman was the writer of this "able and attractive but deceptive and dangerous work," and then the criticisms were barbed with sharper teeth. "The writer" (says the *Christian Observer*), "we are told, is a lady, but there is nothing feeble or even feminine in the tone of the work. . . . . Our dislike is increased when we are told it is a female (!) who has propounded so unfeminine and stoical a theory . . . . and has contradicted openly the true sayings of the living God!" The *Guardian* (November 21st, 1855) finally had this delightful paragraph: "The author professes great admiration for Theodore Parker and Francis Newman, but his own pages are not disfigured by the arrogance of the one or the shallow levity of the other" (think of the *shallow levity* of Newman's book of the *Soul!*). "He writes gravely not defiantly, as befits a man giving utterance to thoughts which he knows *will be generally regarded as impious.*"

I shall now offer the reader a few extracts; and first from the *Preface*:—

"It cannot surely be questioned but that we want a System of Morals better than any of those which are current amongst us. We want a system which shall neither be too shallow for the requirements of thinking men, nor too abstruse for popular acceptation; but which shall be based upon the ultimate grounds of philosophy, and be developed with such distinctness as to be understood by every one capable of studying the subject. We want a System of Morals which shall not entangle itself with sectarian creeds, nor imperil its authority with that of tottering Churches, but which shall be indissolubly blended with a Theology fulfilling all the demands of the Religious Sentiment—a Theology forming a part, and the one living part, of all the theologies which ever have been or shall be. We want a system which shall not degrade the Law of the Eternal Right by announcing it as a mere contrivance for the production of human happiness, or by tracing our knowledge of it to the experience of the senses, or by cajoling us into obeying it as a matter of expediency; but a system which shall ascribe to that Law its own sublime office in the universe, which shall recognise in man the faculties by which he obtains a supersensible knowledge of it, and which shall inculcate obedience to it on motives so pure and holy, that the mere statement of them shall awaken in every breast that higher and better self which can never be aroused by the call of interest or expediency.

"It would be in itself a presumption for me to disclaim the ability necessary for supplying such a want as this. In writing this book, I have aimed chiefly at two objects. First. I have sought to unite into one homogeneous and self-consistent whole the purest and most enlarged theories hitherto propounded on ethical science. Especially I have endeavoured to popularise those of Kant, by giving the simplest possible presentation to his doctrines regarding the Freedom of the Will and the supersensible source of

our knowledge of all Necessary Truths, including those of Morals. I do not claim however, even so far as regards these doctrines, to be an exact exponent of Kant's opinions . . . . Secondly. I have sought (and this has been my chief aim) to place for the first time, at the foundation of ethics, the great but neglected truth that the End of Creation is not the Happiness, but the Virtue, of Rational Souls. I believe that this truth will be found to throw most valuable light, not only upon the Theory, but upon all the details of Practical Morals. Nay, more, I believe that we must look to it for such a solution of the 'Riddle of the World' as shall satisfy the demands of the Intellect while presenting to the Religious Sentiment that same God of perfect Justice and Goodness whose ideal it intuitively conceives and spontaneously adores. Only with this view of the Designs of God can we understand how His Moral attributes are consistent with the creation of a race which is indeed 'groaning in sin' and 'travailing in sorrow'; but by whose freedom to sin and trial of sorrow shall be worked out at last the most blessed End which Infinite Love could desire. With this clew, we shall also see how (as the Virtue of each individual must be produced by himself, and is the share committed to him in the grand end of creation) all Duties must necessarily range themselves accordingly—the Personal before the Social—in a sequence entirely different from that which is conformable with the hypothesis that Happiness is 'our being's end and aim'; but which is, nevertheless, precisely the sequence in which Intuition has always peremptorily demanded that they should be arranged. We shall see how (as the bestowal of Happiness on man must always be postponed by God to the still more blessed aim of conducing to his Virtue) the greatest outward woes and trials, so far from inspiring us with doubts of His Goodness, must be taken as evidences of the glory of that End of Virtue to which they lead, even as the depth of the foundations of a cathedral may show how high the towers and spires will one day ascend."—*Pref.*, pp. V.—X.

In the first chapter entitled *What is the Moral Law?* I take for motto Antigone's great speech :—

"ἄγραπτα κἀσφαλῆ θεῶν
νόμιμα . . . .
οὐ γάρ τι νύν γε κἀχθές ἀλλ ἀεί ποτε
ζῇ ταὐτα κοὐδεὶς οἶδεν ἐξ ὅτου 'φανη.
Σοφ 'Αντιγ 454."

I begin by defining Moral actions and sentiments as those of Rational Free Agents, to which alone may be applied the terms of Right or Wrong, Good or Evil, Virtuous or Vicious. I then proceed to say :—

"This moral character of good or evil is a real, universal and eternal distinction, existing through all worlds and for ever, wherever there are rational creatures and free agents. As one kind of line is a straight line, and another a crooked line, and as no line can be both straight and crooked, so one kind of action or sentiment is right, and another is wrong, and no action or sentiment can be both right or wrong. And as the same line which is straight on this planet would be straight in Sirius or Alcyone, and what constitutes straightness in the nineteenth century will constitute straightness in the nineteenth millennium, so that sentiment or action which is right in our world, is right in all worlds; and that which constitutes righteousness now will constitute righteousness through all eternity. And as the character of straightness belongs to the line, by whatsoever hand it may have been traced, so the character of righteousness belongs to the sentiment or action, by what rational free agent soever it may have been felt or performed.

"And of this distinction language affords a reliable exponent. When we have designated one kind of figure by the word Circle, and another by the word Triangle, those terms, having become the names of the respective figures, cannot be transposed without transgression of the laws of language. Thus it would be absurd to argue that the

figure we call a circle, may not be a circle; that a 'plane figure, containing a point from which all right lines drawn to the circumference shall be equal,' may not be a circle, but a triangle. In like manner, when we have designated one kind of sentiment or action as Right, and another as Wrong, it becomes an absurdity to say that the kind of sentiments or actions we call Right may, perhaps, be Wrong. If a figure be not a circle, according to our sense of the word, it is not a circle at all, but an Ellipse, a Triangle, Trapezium, or something else. If a sentiment or action be not Right, according to our sense of the word, it is not Right at all, but, according to the laws of language, must be called Wrong.

"It is not maintained that we can commit no error in affixing the *name* of Circle to a particular figure, or of Right to a particular sentiment or action. We may at a hasty glance pronounce an ellipse to be a circle; but when we have proved the radii to be unequal, needs must we arrive at a better judgment. Our error was caused by our first haste and misjudgment, not by our inability to decide whether an object presented to us bears or does not bear a character to which we have agreed to affix a certain name. In like manner, from haste or prejudice, we may pronounce a faulty sentiment or action to be Right; but when we have examined it in all its bearings, we ourselves are the first to call it Wrong."—Pp. 4—7.

After much more on the *positive* nature of Good, and the negative nature of Evil, and on the relation of the Moral Law to God as *impersonated* in His Will, and not the result (as Ockham taught) of his arbitrary decree,—I sum up the argument of this first chapter. To the question, What is the Moral Law? I answer:

"The Moral Law is the embodiment of the eternal Necessary obligation of all Rational Free Agents to do and feel those actions and sentiments which are Right. The identi-

fication of this law with His will constitutes the *Holiness* of the infinite God. Voluntary and disinterested obedience to this law constitutes the *Virtue* of all finite creatures. Virtue is capable of infinite growth, of endless approach to the Divine nature, and to perfect conformity with the law. God has made all rational free agents for virtue, and (doubtless) all worlds for rational free agents. The Moral Law, therefore, not only reigns throughout His creation (its behests being finally enforced therein by His power), but is itself the reason why that creation exists. The material universe, with all its laws, and all the events which result therefrom, has one great purpose, and tends to one great end. It is that end which infinite Love has designed, and which infinite Power shall surely accomplish,—the everlasting approximation of all created souls to Goodness and to God."—(Pp. 62, 63.)

The second chapter undertakes to answer the question, *Where the Moral Law is Found?* and begins by a brief analysis of the two great classes of human knowledge as a preliminary to ascertaining to which of these our knowledge of ethics belongs.

"All sciences are either Exact or Physical (or are applications of Exact to Physical science).

"Exact sciences are deduced from axiomatic Necessary truths and results in universal propositions, each of which is a Necessary Truth.

"Physical sciences are induced from Experimental Contingent truths, and result in General Propositions, each of which is a contingent truth.

"We obtain our knowledge of the Experimental Contingent Truths from which Physical science is induced, by the united action of our bodily senses and of our minds themselves, which must both in each case contribute their proper quota to make knowledge possible. Every perception necessitates this double element of sensation and intuition. —the objective and subjective factor in combination.

"We obtain our knowledge of the axiomatic Necessary Truths from which Exact science is deduced, by the *à priori* operation of the mind alone, and (*quoad* the exac science in question) without the aid of sensation (Not, indeed, by *à priori* operation of a mind which has never worked with sensation, for such a mind would be altogether barren; but of one which has reached normal development under normal conditions; which conditions involve the continual united action productive of perceptions of contingent truths).

"In this distinction between the sources of our knowledge lies the most important discovery of philosophy. Into whatsoever knowledge the element of Sensation necessarily enters as a constituent part, therein there can be no absolute certainty of truth; the fallibility of Sensation being recognised on all hands, and neutralising the certainty of the pure mental element. But when we discover an order of sciences which, without aid from sensation, are deduced by the mind's own operation from those Necessary truths which we hold on a tenure marking indelibly their distinction from all contingent truths whatsoever, then we obtain footing in a new realm. . . . .

"In the ensuing pages I shall endeavour to demonstrate that the science of Morals belongs to the class of Exact sciences, and that it has consequently a right to that credence wherewith we hold the truths of arithmetic and geometry. . . . ."

The test which divides the two classes is as follows:—

"What truth soever is *Necessary* and of universal extent is derived by the mind from its own operation, and does not rest on observation or experience; as, conversely, what truth or perception soever is present to the mind with a consciousness, not of its Necessity, but of its Contingency, is ascribable not to the original agency of the mind itself, but derives its origin from observation and experience."

After lengthened discussion on this head and on the supposed mistakes of moral intuition, I go on to say:

"The consciousness of the Contingency, or the consciousness of the Necessity (*i.e.*, the consciousness that the truth *cannot* be contingent, but must hold good in all worlds for ever), these consciousnesses are to be relied on, for they have their origin in, and are the marks of, the different elements from which they have been derived.* We may apply them to the fundamental truths of any science, and by observing whether the reception of such truths into our minds be accompanied by the consciousness of Necessity or of Contingency, we may decide whether the science be rightfully Exact or Physical, deductive or inductive.

"For example, we take the axioms of arithmetic and geometry, and we find that we have distinct consciousness that they are Necessary truths. We cannot conceive them altered any where or at any time. The sciences which are deduced from these and from similar axioms are then, Exact sciences.

"Again: we take the ultimate facts of geology and anatomy, and we find that we have distinct consciousness that they are Contingent truths. We can readily suppose them other than we find them. The sciences, then, which are induced from these and similar facts are not Exact sciences.

"If, then, morals can be shown to bear this test equally with mathematics,—if there be any fundamental truths of morals holding in our minds the status of those axioms of geometry and arithmetic of whose Necessity we are con-

* "It is a fact of Consciousness to which all experience bears witness and which it is the duty of the philosopher to admit and account for, instead of disguising or mutilating it to suit the demands of a system, that there are certain truths which when once acquired, no matter how, it is impossible by any effort of thought to conceive as reversed or reversible."—Mansel's *Metaphysics*, p. 248.

scious, then these fundamental truths of morals are entitled to be made the basis of an Exact science the subsequent theorems of which must all be deduced from them.—(P. 76.) . . .

"Men like Hume traverse the history of our race, to collect all the piteous instances of aberrations which have resulted from neglect or imperfect study of the moral consciousness; and then they cry, 'Behold what it teaches!' Yet I suppose that it will be admitted that Man is an animal capable of knowing geometry; though, if we were to go up and down the world, asking rich and poor, Englishman and Esquimaux, what are the ratios of solidity and superficies of a sphere, a right cylinder and an equilateral cone circumscribed about it, there are sundry chances that we should hear of other ratios besides the sesquialterate.

"He who should argue that, because people ignorant of geometry did not know the sesquialterate ratio of the sphere, cyclinder and cone, therefore no man could know it, or that because they disputed it, that therefore it was uncertain, would argue no more absurdly than he who urges the divergencies of half civilised and barbarian nations as a reason why no man could know, or know with certainty, the higher propositions of morals."

After analysing the Utilitarian and other theories which derive Morality from Contingent truths, I conclude that "the truths of Morals are Necessary Truths. The origin of our knowledge of them is Intuitive, and their proper treatment is Deductive."

The third Chapter treats of the proposition, "That the Moral Law can be obeyed," and discusses the doctrine of Kant, that the true self of Man, the *Homo Noumenon*, is free, self legislative of Law fit for Law Universal; while as the *Homo Phenomenon*, an inhabitant of the world of sense, he is a mere link in the chain of causes and effects, and his actions are locked up in mechanic laws which, had he no other rank, would ensue exactly according to the physical

impulses given by the instincts and solicitations in the sensory. But as an inhabitant (also) of the supersensitive world his position is among the causalities which taking their rise therein, are the ultimate ground of phenomena. The discussion in this chapter on the above proposition cannot be condensed into any space admissible here.

The fourth Chapter seeks to determine *Why the Moral Law should be Obeyed.* It begins thus :—

"In the last Chapter (Chapter III.) I endeavoured to demonstrate that the pure Will, the true self of man, is by nature righteous; self-legislative of the only Universal Law, viz., the Moral; and that by this spontaneous autonomy would all his actions be squared, were it not for his lower nature, which is by its constitution unmoral, neither righteous nor unrighteous, but capable only of determining its choice by its instinctive propensities and the gratifications offered to them. Thus these two are contrary one to another, 'and the spirit lusteth against the flesh, and the flesh against the spirit.' In the valour of the higher nature acquired by its victory over the lower, in the virtue of the tried and conquering soul, we look for the glorious end of creation, the sublime result contemplated by Infinite Benevolence in calling man into existence and fitting him with the complicated nature capable of developing that Virtue which alone can be the crown of finite intelligences. The great practical problem of human life is this: 'How is the Moral Will to gain the victory over the unmoral instincts, the *Homo Noumenon* over the *Homo Phenomenon*, Michael over the Evil One, Mithras over Hyle?'"

In pursuing this enquiry of how the Moral Will is to be rendered victorious, I am led back to the question: Is Happiness "our end and aim?" What relation does it bear to Morality as a motive?

"I have already argued, in Chapter I., that Happiness, properly speaking, is the gratification of *all* the desires of

our compound nature, and that moral, intellectual, affectional, and sensual pleasures are all to be considered as integers, whose sum, when complete, would constitute perfect Happiness. From this multiform nature of Happiness it has arisen, that those systems of ethics which set it forth as the proper motive of Virtue have differed immensely from one another, according as the Happiness they respectively contemplated was thought of as consisting in the pleasures of our Moral, or of our Intellectual, Affectional, and Sensual natures; whether the pleasures were to be sought by the virtuous man for his own enjoyment, or for the general happiness of the community.

"The pursuit of Virtue for the sake of its intrinsic, *i.e.*, Moral pleasure, is designated EUTHUMISM.

"The pursuit of Virtue for the sake of the extrinsic Affectional, Intellectual, and Sensual pleasure resulting from it, is designated EUDAIMONISM.

"Euthumism is of one kind only, for the individual can only seek the intrinsic pleasure of Virtue for his own enjoyment thereof.

"Eudaimonism, on the contrary, is of two most distinct kinds. That which I have called PUBLIC EUDAIMONISM sets forth the intellectual, affectional, and sensual pleasures of *all mankind* as the proper object of the Virtue of each individual. PRIVATE EUDAIMONISM sets forth the same pleasures of the *individual himself* as the proper object of his Virtue.

"These two latter systems are commonly confounded under the name of 'UTILITARIAN ETHICS.' Their principles, as I have stated them, will be seen to be wide asunder; yet there are few of the advocates of either who have not endeavoured to stand on the grounds of both, and even to borrow elevation from those of the Euthumist. Thus, by appealing alternately to philanthropy* and to a gross and a refined Selfishness, they suit the purpose of the moment, and prevent their scheme from deviating too far from the

* We should now say *Altruism*.

intuitive conscience of mankind. It may be remarked, also, that the Private Eudaimonists insist more particularly on the pleasures of a *Future Life;* and in the exposition of them necessarily approach nearer to the Euthumists."

I here proceeded to discuss the three systems which have arisen from the above-defined different views of Happiness, each contemplating it as the proper motive of Virtue: namely, 1st, Euthumism; 2nd, Public Eudaimonism; and 3rd, Private Eudaimonism.

"1st. Euthumism. This system, as I have said, sets forth the *Moral Pleasure*, the peace and cheerfulness of mind, and applause of conscience enjoyed in Virtue, as the proper motive for its practice. Conversely, it sets forth as the dissuadent from Vice, the pain of remorse, the inward uneasiness and self-contempt which belong to it.

"Democritus appears to have been the first who gave clear utterance to this doctrine, maintaining that Εὐθυμία was the proper End of human actions, and sharply distinguishing it from the 'Ηδονή' proposed as such by Aristippus. The claims of a '*mens conscia recti*' to be the 'Summum Bonum,' occupied, as is well known, a large portion of the subsequent disputes of the Epicureans, Cynics, Stoics and Academics, and were eagerly argued by Cicero, and even down to the time of Boethius. Many of these sects, however, and in particular the Stoics, though maintaining that Virtue alone is sufficient for Happiness (that is, that the inward joy of Virtue is enough to constitute Happiness in the midst of torments), yet by no means set forth that Happiness as the sole *motive* of Virtue. They held, on the contrary, the noblest ideas of 'living according to Nature,' that is, as Chrysippus explained it, according to the 'Nature of the universe, the common Law of all, which is the right reason spread everywhere, the same by which Jupiter governs the world'; and that both Virtue and Happiness consisted in so regulating our actions that they should produce harmony between the

Spirit in each of us, and the Will of Him who rules the universe. There is little or no trace of Euthumism in the Jewish or Christian Scriptures, or (to my knowledge) in the sacred books of the Brahmins, Buddhists, or Parsees. The ethical problems argued by the mediæval Schoolmen do not, so far as I am aware, embrace the subject in question. The doctrine was revived, however, in the seventeenth century, and beside blending with more or less distinctness with the views of a vast number of lesser moralists, it reckons among its professed adherents no less names than Henry More and Bishop Cumberland. Euthumism, philosophically considered, will be found to affix itself most properly on the doctrine of the 'Moral Sense' laid down by Shaftesbury as the origin of our *knowledge* of moral distinctions, which, if it were, it would naturally follow that it must afford also the right *motive* of Virtue. Hutcheson, also, still more distinctly stated that this Moral Pleasure in Virtue (which both he and Shaftesbury likened to the æsthetic Pleasure in Beauty) was the true ground of our choice. To this Balguy replied, that 'to make the rectitude of moral actions depend upon instinct, and, in proportion to the warmth and strength of the Moral Sense, rise and fall like spirits in a thermometer, is depreciating the most sacred thing in the world, and almost exposing it to ridicule.' And Whewell has shown that the doctrine of the Moral Sense as the foundation of Morals must always fail, whether understood as meaning a sense like that of Beauty (which may or may not be merely a modification of the Agreeable), or a sense like those of Touch or Taste (which no one can fairly maintain that any of our moral perceptions really resemble).

"But, though neither the true source of our *Knowledge* of Moral Distinctions, nor yet the right *Motive* why we are to choose the Good, this Moral Sense of Pleasure in Virtue, and Pain in Vice, is a psychological fact demanding the investigation of the Moralist. Moreover, the error of allowing our moral choice to be decided by a regard to the pure joy of Virtue or awful pangs of self-condemnation, is

an error so venial in comparison of other moral heresies, and so easily to be confounded with a truer principle of Morals, that it is particularly necessary to warn generous natures against it. 'It is quite beyond the grasp of human thought,' says Kant, 'to explain how reason can be practical; how the mere Morality of the law, independently of every object man can be interested in, can itself beget an interest which is purely Ethical; how a naked thought, containing in it nothing of the sensory, can bring forth an emotion of pleasure or pain.'

"Unconsciously this Sense of Pleasure in a Virtuous Act, the thought of the peace of conscience which will follow it, or the dread of remorse for its neglect, must mingle with our motives. But we can never be permitted, consciously to exhibit them to ourselves as the ground of our resolution to obey the Law. That Law is not valid for man because it interests him, but it interests him because it has validity for him—because it springs from his true being, his proper self. The interest he feels is an Effect, not a Cause; a Contingency, not a Necessity. Were he to obey the Law merely from this Interest, it would not be free Self-legislation (autonomy), but (heteronomy) subservience of the Pure Will to a lower faculty—a Sense of Pleasure. And, practically, we may perceive that all manner of mischiefs and absurdities must arise if a man set forth Moral Pleasure as the determinator of his Will. . . . .

"Thus, the maxim of Euthumism, '*Be virtuous for the sake of the Moral Pleasure of Virtue*,' may be pronounced false.

"2nd. Public Eudaimonism sets forth, both as the ground of our knowledge of Virtue and the motive for our practice of it, '*The Greatest Happiness of the Greatest Number*.' This Happiness, as Paley understood it, is composed of Pleasures to be estimated only by their Intensity and Duration; or, as Bentham added, by their Certainty, Propinquity, Fecundity, and Purity (or freedom from admixture of evil).

"Let it be granted for argument's sake, that the calculable Happiness resulting from actions can determine their

Virtue (although all experience teaches that resulting Happiness is not calculable, and that the Virtue must at least be one of the items determining the resulting Happiness). On the Utilitarian's own assumption, what sort of motive for Virtue can be his end of '*The Greatest Happiness of the Greatest Number?*'

"No sooner had Paley laid down the grand principle of his system, '*Whatever is Expedient is Right*,' than he proceeds (as he thinks) to guard against its malapplication by arguing that nothing is expedient which produces, along with *particular* good consequences, *general* bad ones, and that this is done by the violation of any general rule. 'You cannot,' says he, 'permit one action and forbid another without showing a difference between them. Consequently the same sort of actions must be generally permitted or generally forbidden. Where, therefore, the general permission of them would be pernicious, it becomes necessary to lay down and support the rule which generally forbids them.'

"Now, let the number of experienced consequences of actions be ever so great, it must be admitted that the Inductions we draw therefrom can, at the utmost, be only provisional, and subject to revision should new facts be brought in to bear in an opposite scale. . . .

"Further, the rules induced from experience must be not only provisional, but partial. The lax term 'general' misleads us. A Moral Rule must be either universal and open to no exception, or, properly speaking, no *rule* at all. Each case of Morals stands alone.

"Thus, the Experimentalist's conclusion, for example, that 'Lying does more harm than good,' may be quite remodelled by the fortunate discovery of so prudent a kind of falsification as shall obviate the mischief and leave the advantage. No doubt can remain on the mind of any student of Paley, that this would have been his own line of argument: 'If we can only prove that a lie be expedient, then it becomes a duty to lie.' As he says himself of the rule (which if any rule may do so may surely claim to be

general) 'Do not do evil that good may come,' that it is 'salutary, for the most part, the advantage seldom compensating for the violation of the rule.' So to do evil is sometimes salutary, and does now and then compensate for disregarding even the Eudaimonist's last resource—a General Rule!

"2nd. Private Eudaimonism. There are several formulas, in which this system, (the lowest, but the most logical, of Moral heresies) is embodied. Rutherford puts it thus: 'Every man's Happiness is the ultimate end which Reason teaches him to pursue, and the constant and uniform practice of Virtue towards all mankind becomes our duty, when Revelation has informed us that God will make us finally happy in a life after this.' Paley (who properly belongs to this school, but endeavours frequently to seat himself on the corners of the stools of Euthumism and Public Eudaimonism), Paley, the standard Moralist of England,* defines Virtue thus: '*Virtue is the doing good to mankind in obedience to the will of God, and for the sake of Everlasting Happiness.* According to which definition, the good of mankind is the subject; the will of God the rule; and Everlasting Happiness the motive of Virtue.'

"Yet it seems to me, that if there be any one truth which intuition does teach us more clearly than another, it is precisely this one—that Virtue to be Virtue must be disinterested. The moment we picture any species of reward becoming the bait of our Morality, that moment we see the holy flame of Virtue annihilated in the noxious gas. A man is not Virtuous at all who is honest because it is 'good policy,' beneficent from love of approbation, pious for the sake of heaven. All this is prudence not virtue, selfishness not self-sacrifice. If he be honest for sake of policy, would he be dishonest, if it could be proved that it were more politic? If he would *not*, then he is not really honest from policy but from some deeper principle thrust

* I am thankful to believe that he would be no longer accorded such a rank in 1890 as in 1850!

into the background of his consciousness. If he *would*, then it is idlest mockery to call that honesty Virtuous which only waits a bribe to become dishonest.

"But there are many Eudaimonists who will be ready to acknowledge that a prudent postponement of our happiness in *this* world cannot constitute virtue. But wherefore do they say we are to postpone it? Not for present pleasure or pain, that would be base; but for that anticipation of future pleasure or pain which we call Hope and Fear. And this, not for the Hope and Fear of this world, which are still admitted to be base motives; but for Hope and Fear extended one step beyond the tomb—the Hope of Heaven and the Fear of Hell.'

After a general glance at the doctrine of Future Rewards and Punishments as held by Christians and heathens, I go on to argue:—

"But in truth this doctrine of the Hope of Heaven being the true Motive of Virtue is (at least in theory) just as destructive of Virtue as that which makes the rewards of this life—health, wealth, or reputation—the motive of it. Well says brave Kingsley:

> 'Is selfishness for time a sin,
> Stretched out into eternity celestial prudence?'

"If to act for a small reward cannot be virtuous, to act for a large one can certainly merit no more. To be bribed by a guinea is surely no better than to be bribed by a penny. To be deterred from ruin by fear of transportation for life, is no more noble than to be deterred by fear of twenty-four hours in prison. There is no use multiplying illustrations. He who can think that Virtue is the doing right for pay, may think himself very judicious to leave his pay in the savings-bank now and come into a fortune all at once by and by; but he who thinks that Virtue is the doing right for Right's own sake, cannot possibly draw a distinction

between small bribes and large ones; a reward to be given to-day, and a reward to be given in eternity.

"Nevertheless it cannot be denied that the belief in immortal progress is of incalculable value. Such belief, and that in an ever-present God, may be called the two wings of human Virtue. I look on the advantages of a faith in immortality to be two-fold. First, it cuts the knot of the world, and gives to our apprehension a God whose providence need no longer perplex us, and whose immeasurable and never-ending goodness shines ever brighter before our contemplating souls. Secondly, it gives an importance to personal progress which we can hardly attribute to it so long as we deem it is to be arrested for ever by death. The man who does not believe in Immortality may be, and often actually is, more virtuous than his neighbour; and it is quite certain that his Virtue is of far purer character than that which bargains for Heaven as its pay. But his task is a very hard one, a task without a result; and his road a dreary one, unenlightened even by the distant dawn of

> 'That great world of light which lies
> Behind all human destinies.'

We can scarcely do him better service than by leading him to trust that intuition of Immortality which is written in the heart of the human race by that Hand which writes no falsehoods.

"But if the attainment of Heaven be no true motive for the pursuit of Virtue, surely I may be held excused from denouncing that practice of holding out the fear of Hell wherewith many fill up the measure of moral degradation? Here it is vain to suppose that the fear is that of the immortality of sin and banishment from God; as we are sometimes told the hope of Heaven is that of an immortality of Virtue and union with Him. The mind which sinks to the debasement of any Fear is already below the level at which sin and estrangement are terrors. It is his weakness of will which alone hinders the Prodigal from saying, 'I will arise and go to my Father,' and unless we

can strengthen that Will by some different motive, it is idle to threaten him with its own persistence.

* * * *

"Returning from the contemplation of the lowness of aim common to all the forms of Eudaimonism, how magnificent seems the grand and holy doctrine of true Intuitive Morality? Do RIGHT FOR THE RIGHT'S OWN SAKE: Love God and Goodness because they are Good! The soul seems to awake from death at such archangel's call as this, and mortal man puts on his rightful immortality. The prodigal grovels no longer, seeking for Happiness amid the husks of pleasure; but, 'coming to himself,' he arises and goes to his Father, heedless if it be but as the lowest of His servants he may yet dwell beneath that Father's smile. Hope and fear for this life or the next, mercenary bargainings, and labour of eye-service, all are at end. He is a Free-man, and free shall be the oblation of his soul and body, the reasonable, holy, and acceptable sacrifice.

"O Living Soul! wilt thou follow that mighty hand, and obey that summons of the trumpet? Perchance thou hast reached life's solemn noon, and with the bright hues of thy morning have faded away the beautiful aspirations of thy youth. Doubtless thou hast often struggled for the Right; but, weary with frequent overthrows, thou criest, 'This also is vanity.' But think again, O Soul, whose sun shall never set! Have no poor and selfish ambitions mingled with those struggles and made them vanity? Have no theologic dogmas from which thy maturer reason revolts, been blended with thy purer principle? Hast thou nourished no extravagant hope of becoming suddenly sinless, or of heaping up with an hour's labour a mountain of benefits on thy race? Surely some mistake like these lies at the root of all moral discouragement. But mark:—

"Pure morals forbid all base and selfish motives—all happiness-seeking, fame-seeking, love-seeking—in this world or the next, as motives of Virtue. Pure Morals rest not on

any traditional dogma, not on history, on philology, on criticism, but on those intuitions, clear as the axioms of geometry, which thine own soul finds in its depths, and knows to be necessary truths, which, short of madness, it cannot disbelieve.

"Pure Morals offer no panacea to cure in a moment all the diseases of the human heart, and transform the sinner into the saint. They teach that the passions, which are the machinery of our moral life, are not to be miraculously annihilated, but by slow and unwearying endeavour to be brought into obedience to the Holy Will; while to fall and rise again many a time in the path of virtue is the inevitable lot of every pilgrim therein. . . . Our hearts burn within us when for a moment the vision rises before our sight of what we might make our life even here upon earth. Faintly can any words picture that vision!

"A life of Benevolence, in which every word of our lips, every work of our hands, had been a contribution to human virtue or human happiness; a life in which, ever wider and warmer through its three score years and ten had grown our pure, unwavering, Godlike Love, till we had spread the same philanthropy through a thousand hearts ere we passed away from earth to love yet better still our brethren in the sky.

"A life of Personal Virtue, in which every evil disposition had been trampled down, every noble sentiment called forth and strengthened; a life in which, leaving day by day further behind us the pollutions of sin, we had also ascended daily to fresh heights of purity, till self-conquest, unceasingly achieved, became continually more secure and more complete, and at last—

> 'The lordly Will o'er its subject powers
> Like a thronèd God prevailed,'

and we could look back upon the great task of earth, and say, 'It is finished!'

"A life of Religion, in which the delight in God's presence, the reverence for His moral attributes, the desire to obey

His Will, and the consciousness of His everlasting love, had grown continually clearer and stronger, and of which Prayer, deepest and intensest, had been the very heart and nucleus, till we had found God drawing ever nearer to us as we drew near to him, and vouchsafing to us a communion the bliss of which no human speech may ever tell; the dawning of that day of adoration which shall grow brighter and brighter still while all the clusters of the suns fade out and die.

"And turning from our own destiny, from the endless career opened to our Benevolence, our Personal Virtue, and our Piety, we take in a yet broader view, and behold the whole universe of God mapped out in one stupendous Plan of Love. In the abyss of the past eternity we see the Creator for ever designing and for ever accomplishing the supremest end at which infinite Justice and Goodness could aim, and absolute Wisdom and Power bring to pass. For this end, for the Virtue of all finite Intelligences, we behold Him building up millions of starry abodes and peopling them with immortal spirits clothed in the garbs of flesh, and endowed with that moral freedom whose bestowal was the highest boon of Omnipotence. As ages of millenniums roll away, we see a double progress working through all the realms of space; a progress of each race and of each individual. Slowly and securely, though with many an apparent retrogression, does each world-family become better, wiser, nobler, happier. Slowly and securely, though with many a grievous backsliding, each living soul grows up to Virtue. Nor pauses that awful march for a moment, even in the death of the being or the cataclysm of the world. Over all Death and Change reigns that Almighty changeless will which has decreed the holiness and happiness of every spirit He hath made. Through the gates of the grave, and on the ruins of worlds, shall those spirits climb, higher and yet higher through the infinite ages, nearer and yet nearer to Goodness and to God."

# CHAPTER VI.

## *IRELAND IN THE FORTIES.*

### *THE PEASANTRY.*

## CHAPTER VI.

### Ireland in the Thirties and Forties.

The prominence which Irish grievances have taken of late years in English politics has caused me often to review with fresh eyes the state of the country as it existed in my childhood and youth, when, of course, both the good and evil of it appeared to me to be part of the order of nature itself.

I will first speak of the condition of the working classes, then of the gentry and clergy.

I had considerable opportunities for many years of hearing and seeing all that was going on in our neighbourhood, which was in the district known as "Fingal" (the White Strangers' land), having been once the territory of the Danes. Fingal extends along the sea-coast between Dublin and Drogheda, and our part lay exactly between Malahide and Rush. My father, and at a later time my eldest brother, were indefatigable as magistrates, Poor-law Guardians and landlords in their efforts to relieve the wants and improve the condition of the people; and it fell on me naturally, as the only active woman of the family, to play the part of Lady Bountiful on a rather large scale. There was my father's own small village of Donabate in the first place, claiming my attention; and beyond it a larger straggling collection of mud cabins named "Balisk"; the landlord of which, Lord Trimleston, was an absentee, and the village a centre of fever and misery. In Donabate there was never any real distress. In every house there were wage-earners or pensioners enough to keep the wolf from the door. Only when sickness came was there need for extra food, wine, and

so on. The wages of a field-labourer were, at that time, about 8s. a week; of course without keep. His diet consisted of oatmeal porridge, wheaten griddle-bread, potatoes and abundance of buttermilk. The potatoes, before the Famine, were delicious tubers. Many of the best kinds disappeared at that time (notably I recall the "Black Bangers"), and the Irish housewife cooked them in a manner which no English or French *Cordon bleu* can approach. I remember constantly seeing little girls bringing the mid-day dinners to their fathers, who sat in summer under the trees, and in winter in a comfortable room in our stable-yard, with fire and tables and chairs. The cloth which carried the dinner being removed there appeared a plate of "smiling" potatoes (*i.e.*, with cracked and peeling skins) and in the midst a *well* of about a sixth of a pound of butter. Along with the plate of potatoes was a big jug of milk, and a hunch of griddle-bread. On this food the men worked in summer from six (or earlier, if mowing was to be done) till breakfast, and from thence till one o'clock. After an hour's dinner the great bell tolled again, and work went on till 6. In winter there was no cessation of work from 8 a.m. till 5 p.m., when it ended. Of course these long hours of labour in the fields, without the modern interruptions, were immensely valuable on the farm. I do not think I err in saying that my father had thirty per cent. more profitable labour from his men for 8s. a week, than is now to be had from labourers at 16s.; at all events where I live here, in Wales. It is fair to note that beside their wages my father's men, and also the old women whose daughters (eight in number) worked in the shrubberies and other light work all the year round, were allowed each the grazing of a cow on his pastures, and were able to get coal from the ships he chartered every winter from Whitehaven for 11s. a ton, drawn to the village by his horses. At Christmas an ox was divided among them, and generally

also a good quantity of frieze for the coats of the men, and for the capes of the eight "Amazons."

I cannot say what amount of genuine loyalty really existed among our people at that time. Outwardly, it appeared they were happy and contented, though, in talking to the old people, one never failed to hear lamentations for the "good old times" of the past generations. In those times, as we knew very well, nothing like the care we gave to the wants of the working classes was so much as dreamed of by our forefathers. But they kept open house, where all comers were welcome to eat and drink in the servants' hall when they came up on any protext; and this kind of hospitality has ever been a supreme merit in Celtic eyes. Some readers will remember that the famous chieftainess, Grana Uaile, invading Howth in one of her piratical expeditions in the "spacious times of great Elizabeth," found the gates of the ancient castle of the St. Lawrences' closed, *though it was dinner-time!* Indignant at this breach of decency, Grana Uaile kidnapped the heir of the lordly house and carried him to her robbers' fortress in Connaught, whence she only released him in subsequent years on the solemn engagement of the Lords of Howth always to dine with the doors of Howth Castle wide open. I believe it is not more than 50 years, if so much, since this practice was abolished.

I think the only act of "tyranny" with which I was charged when I kept my father's house, and which provoked violent recalcitration, was when I gave orders that men coming from our mountains to Newbridge on business with "the Master" should be served with largest platefuls of meat and jugs of beer, but should not be left in the servants' hall *en tête-à-tête* with whole rounds and sirloins of beef, of which no account could afterwards be obtained!

Of course, the poor labourer in Ireland at that time after the failure of the potatoes, who had no allowances, and had

many young children unable to earn anything for themselves, was cruelly tightly placed. I shall copy here a calculation which I took down in a note-book, still in my possession, after sifting enquiries concerning prices at our village shops, in, or about, the year 1845:—

Wheatmeal costs 2s. 3d. per stone of 14 lbs.
Oatmeal ,, 2s. 4d. ,, ,,
India meal ,, 1s. 8d. ,, ,,
24 lbs. of wheatmeal makes 18 lbs. of griddle bread.
1 lb. of oatmeal makes 3 lbs. of stirabout.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| A man will require | 4 lbs. food per day ... | 28 lbs. | per week. |
| A woman ,, | 3 lbs. ,, ... | 21 lbs. | ,, |
| Each child at least | 2 lbs. ,, ... | 14 lbs. | ,, |

A family of 3 will therefore require 63 lbs. of food per week—*e.g.*,

| | s. | d. |
|---|---|---|
| 1 stone wheat—18 lbs. bread .. ... ... | 2 | 3 |
| 1 stone oatmeal—42 lbs. stirabout ... ... | 2 | 4 |
| 60 lbs. food; cost ... ... | 4 | 7 |

A family of 5 will require—

| | |
|---|---|
| Man ... ... ... ... | 28 lbs. |
| Wife ... ... ... ... | 21 lbs. |
| 3 children ... ... ... | 42 lbs. |
| | 91 lbs. food. |

| | s. | d. |
|---|---|---|
| Say 30 lbs. bread—23 lbs. wheatmeal ... ... | 3 | 10 |
| 61 lbs. stirabout—20 lbs. oatmeal ... ... | 3 | 4 |
| 91 lbs. ... ... ... ... ... | 7 | 2 |

Thus, when a man had five children to support, and no potatoes, his weekly wages scarcely covered bare food.

Before the Famine and the great fever, the population of our part of Ireland was exceedingly dense; more than 200 to the square mile. There were an enormous number of mud cabins consisting of one room only, run up at every corner of the roadside and generally allowed to sink into miserable squat, *sottish*-looking hovels with no drainage at all; mud floor; broken thatch, two or three rough boards for a door; and the four panes of the sole window stuffed with rags or an old hat. Just 500,000 of these one-roomed cabins, the Registrar-General, Mr. William Donnelly, told me, disappeared between the census before, and the census after the Famine! Nothing was easier than to run them up. Thatch was cheap, and mud abundant, everywhere; and as to the beams (they called them "*bames*"), I remember a man addressing my father coaxingly, "Ah yer Honour will ye plaze spake to the steward to give me a *handful of sprigs?*" "A handful of *sprigs?* What for?" asked my father; "Why for the roof of me new little house, yer Honour, that I'm building fornenst the ould wan!"

I never saw in an Irish cottage any of the fine old oak settles, dressers and armchairs and coffers to be found usually in Welsh ones. A good unpainted deal dresser and table, a wooden bedstead, a couple of wooden chairs, and two or three straw "bosses" (stools) made like beehives, completed the furniture of a well-to-do cabin, with a range of white or willow-pattern plates on the dresser, and two or three frightfully coloured woodcuts pasted on the walls for adornment. Flowers in the gardens or against the walls were never to be seen. Enormous chimney corners, with wooden stools or straw "bosses" under the projecting walls, were the most noticeable feature. Nothing seems to me more absurd and unhistorical than the common idea that the Celt is a beauty-

loving creature, æsthetically far above the Saxon. If he be so, it is surprising that his home, his furniture, his dress, his garden never show the smallest token of his taste! When the young girls from the villages, even from very respectable families, were introduced into our houses, it was a severe tax on the housekeepers' supervision to prevent them from resorting to the most outrageous shifts and misuse of utensils of all sorts. I can recall, for example, one beautiful young creature with the lovely Irish grey eyes and long lashes, and with features so fine that we privately called her "Madonna." For about two years she acted as housemaid to my second brother, who, as I have mentioned, had taken a place in Donegal, and whose excellent London cook, carefully trained "Madonna" into what were (outwardly) ways of pleasantness for her master. At last, and when apparently perfectly "domesticated"—as English advertisers describe themselves,—Madonna married the cowman; and my brother took pleasure in setting up the young couple in a particularly neat and rather lonely cottage with new deal furniture. After six months they emigrated; and when my brother visited their deserted house he found it in a state of which it will suffice to record one item. The pig had slept all the time under the bedstead; and no attempt had been made to remove the resulting heap of manure!

My father had as strong a sense as any modern sanitary reformer of the importance of good and healthy cottages; and having found his estate covered with mud and thatched cabins, he (and my brother after him) laboured incessantly, year by year, to replace them by mortared stone and slated cottages, among which were five schoolhouses, all supported by himself. As it was my frequent duty to draw for him the plans and elevations of these cottages, farmhouses and village shops, with calculations of the cost of each, it may be guessed how truly absurd it seems to me to read exclusively, as I do

so often now, of "tenants' improvements" in Ireland. It is true that my father occasionally let, on long leases and without fines, large farms (of the finest wheat-land in Ireland, within ten miles of Dublin market), at the price of £2 per Irish acre, with the express stipulation that the tenant should undertake the re-building of the house or farm-buildings as the case might be. But these were, of course, perfectly just bargains, made with well-to-do farmers, who made excellent profits. I have already narrated in an earlier chapter, how he sold the best pictures among his heirlooms—one by Hobbema now in Dorchester House and one by Gaspar Poussin,—to rebuild some eighty cottages on his mountains. These cottages had each a small farm attached to it, which was generally held at will, but often continued to the tenants' family for generations. The rent was, in some cases I think, as low as thirty or forty shillings a year; and the tenants contrived to make a fair living with sheep and potatoes; cutting their own turf on the bog, and very often earning a good deal by storing ice in the winter from the river Dodder, and selling it in Dublin in summer. I remember one of them who had been allowed to fall into arrears of rent to the extent of £3, which he loudly protested he could not pay, coming to my father to ask his help as a magistrate to recover *forty pounds*, which an ill-conditioned member of his family had stolen from him out of the usual Irish private hiding-place "under the thatch."

But outside my father's property, when we passed into the next villages on either side, Swords or Rush or Balisk, the state of things was bad enough. I will give a detailed description of the latter village, some of which was written when the memory of the scene and people was less remote, than now. It is the most complete picture of Irish poverty, fifty years ago, which I can offer.

Balisk was certainly *not* the "loveliest village of the plain." Situated partly on the edge of an old common, partly on the skirts of the domain of a nobleman who had not visited his estate for thirty years, it enjoyed all the advantages of freedom from restraint upon the architectural genius of its builders. The result was a long crooked, straggling street, with mud cabins turned to it, and from it, in every possible angle of incidence: some face to face, some back to back, some sideways, some a little retired so as to admit of a larger than ordinary heap of manure between the door and the road. Such is the ground-plan of Balisk. The cabins were all of mud, with mud floors and thatched roofs; some containing one room only, others two, and, perhaps, half-a-dozen, three rooms: all, very literally, on the ground; that is on the bare earth. Furniture, of course, was of the usual Irish description: a bed (sometimes having a bedstead, oftener consisting of a heap of straw on the floor), a table, a griddle, a kettle, a stool or two and a boss of straw, with occasionally the grand adjunct of a settle; a window whose normal condition was being stuffed with an old hat; a door, over and under and around which all the winds and rains of heaven found their way; a population consisting of six small children, a bedridden grandmother, a husband and wife, a cock and three hens, a pig, a dog, and a cat. Lastly, a decoration of coloured prints, including the Virgin with seven swords in her heart, St. Joseph, the story of Dives and Lazarus, and a caricature of a man tossed by a bull, and a fat woman getting over a stile.

Of course as Balisk lies in the lowest ground in the neighbourhood and the drains were originally planned to run at "their own sweet will," the town (as its inhabitants call it) is subject to the inconvenience of being about two feet under water whenever there are any considerable floods of rain. I have known a case of such a flood entering the door

and rising into the bed of a poor woman in childbirth, as in Mr. Macdonald's charming story of Alec Forbes. The woman, whom I knew, however, did not die, but gave to the world that night a very fine little child, whom I subsequently saw scampering along the roads with true Irish hilarity. At other times, when there were no floods, only the usual rains, Balisk presented the spectacle of a filthy green stream slowly oozing down the central street, now and then draining off under the door of any particularly lowly-placed cabin to form a pool in the floor, and finally terminating in a lake of stagnant abomination under the viaduct of a railway. Yes, reader! a railway ran through Balisk, even while the description I have given of it held true in every respect. The only result it seemed to have effected in the village was the formation of the Stygian pool above-mentioned, where, heretofore, the stream had escaped into a ditch.

Let us now consider the people who dwelt amid all this squalor. They were mostly field-labourers, working for the usual wages of seven or eight shillings a week. Many of them held their cabins as freeholds, having built or inherited them from those who had "squatted" unmolested on the common. A few paid rent to the noble landlord before-mentioned. Work was seldom wanting, coals were cheap, excellent schools were open for the children at a penny a week a head. Families which had not more than three or four mouths to fill besides the breadwinners', were not in absolute want, save when disease, or a heavy snow, or a flood, or some similar calamity arrived. Then, down on the ground, poor souls, literally and metaphorically, they could fall no lower, and a week was enough to bring them to the verge of starvation.

Let me try to recall some of the characters of the inhabitants of Balisk in the Forties.

Here in the first cabin is a comfortable family where there are three sons at work, and mother and three daughters at home. Enter at any hour there is a hearty welcome and bright jest ready. Here is the schoolmaster's house, a little behind the others, and back to back with them. It has an attempt at a curtain for the window, a knocker for the door. The man is a curious deformed creature, of whom more will be said hereafter. The wife is what is called in Ireland a "Voteen;" a person given to religion, who spends most of her time in the chapel or repeating prayers, and who wears as much semblance of black as her poor means may allow. Balisk, be it said, is altogether Catholic and devout. It is honoured by the possession of what is called "The Holy Griddle." Perhaps my readers have heard of the Holy Grail, the original sacramental chalice so long sought by the chivalry of the middle ages, and may ask if the Holy Griddle be akin thereto? I cannot trace any likeness. A "griddle," as all the Irish and Scotch world knows, is a circular iron plate, on which the common unleavened cakes of wheatmeal and oatmeal are baked. The Holy Griddle of Balisk was one of these utensils, which was bequeathed to the village under the following circumstances. Years ago, probably in the last century, a poor, "lone widow" lay on her death-bed. She had none to pray for her after she was gone, for she was childless and altogether desolate; neither had she any money to give to the priest to pray for her soul. Yet the terrors of purgatory were near. How should she escape them? She possessed but one object of any value—a griddle, whereon she was wont to bake the meal of the wheat she gleaned every harvest to help her through the winter. So the widow left her griddle as a legacy to the village for ever, on one condition. It was to pass from hand to hand as each might want it, but every one who used her griddle was to say a prayer for her soul. Years had

passed away, but the griddle was still in my time in constant use, as "the best griddle in the town." The cakes baked on the Holy Griddle were twice as good as any others. May the poor widow who so simply bequeathed it have found long ago "rest for her soul" better than any prayers have asked for her, even the favourite Irish prayer, "May you sit in heaven on a golden chair!"

Here is another house, where an old man lives with his sister. The old woman is the Mrs. Gamp of Balisk. Patrick Russell has a curious story attached to him. Having laboured long and well on my father's estate, the latter finding him grow rheumatic and helpless, pensioned him with his wages for life, and Paddy retired to the enjoyment of such privacy as Balisk might afford. Growing more and more helpless, he at last for some years hobbled about feebly on crutches, a confirmed cripple. One day, with amazement, I saw him walking without his crutches, and tolerably firmly, up to Newbridge House. My father went to speak to him, and soon returned, saying: "Here is a strange thing. Paddy Russell says he has been to Father Mathew, and Father Mathew has blessed him, and he is cured! He came to tell me he wished to give up his pension, since he returns to work at Smith's farm next week." Very naturally, and as might be expected, poor Paddy, three weeks later, was again helpless, and a suppliant for the restoration of his pension, which was of course immediately renewed. But one who had witnessed only the scene of the long-known cripple walking up stoutly to decline his pension (the very best possible proof of his sincere belief in his own recovery) might well be excused for narrating the story as a miracle wrought by a true moral reformer, the Irish "Apostle of Temperance."

Next door to Paddy Russell's cabin stood "The Shop," a cabin a trifle better than the rest, where butter, flour, and

dip candles, Ingy-male (Indian meal), and possibly a small quantity of soap, were the chief objects of commerce. Further on came a miserable hovel with the roof broken in, and a pool of filth, *en permanence*, in the middle of the floor. Here dwelt a miserable good-for-nothing old man and equally good-for-nothing daughter; hopeless recipients of anybody's bounty. Opposite them, in a tidy little cabin, always as clean as white-wash and sweeping could make its poor mud walls and earthen floor, lived an old woman and her daughter. The daughter was deformed, the mother a beautiful old woman, bedridden, but always perfectly clean, and provided by her daughter's hard labour in the fields and cockle-gathering on the sea-shore, with all she could need. After years of devotion, when Mary was no longer young, the mother died, and the daughter, left quite alone in the world, was absolutely broken-hearted. Night after night she strayed about the chapel-yard where her mother lay buried, hoping, as she told me, to see her ghost.

"And do you think," she asked, fixing her eyes on me, "do you think I shall ever see her again? I asked Father M—— would I see her in heaven? and all he said was, 'I should see her in the glory of God.' What does that mean? I don't understand what it means. Will I see her *herself*—my poor old mother?"

After long years, I found this faithful heart still yearning to be re-united to the "poor old mother," and patiently labouring on in solitude, waiting till God should call her home out of that little white cabin to one of the "many mansions," where her mother is waiting for her.

Here is a house where there are many sons and daughters and some sort of prosperity. Here, again, is a house with three rooms and several inmates, and in one room lives a strange, tall old man, with something of dignity in his aspect. He asked me once to come into his room, and showed me the

book over which all his spare hours seemed spent; "Thomas à Kempis."

"Ah, yes, that is a great book; a book full of beautiful things."

"Do you know it? do Protestants read it?"

"Yes, to be sure; we read all sorts of books."

"I'm glad of it. It's a comfort to me to think you read this book."

Here again is an old woman with hair as white as snow, who deliberately informs me she is ninety-eight years of age, and next time I see her, corrects herself, and "believes it is eighty-nine, but it is all the same, she disremembers numbers." This poor old soul in some way hurt her foot, and after much suffering was obliged to have half of it amputated. Strange to say, she recovered, but when I congratulated her on the happy event, I shall never forget the outbreak of true feminine sentiment which followed. Stretching out the poor mutilated and blackened limb, and looking at it with woeful compassion, she exclaimed, "Ah, ma'am, but it will never be a *purty* foot again!" Age, squalor, poverty, and even mutilation, had not sufficed to quench that little spark of vanity which "springs eternal in the (female) breast."

Here, again, are half-a-dozen cabins, each occupied by widows with one or more daughters; eight of whom form my father's pet corps of Amazons, always kept working about the shrubberies and pleasure-grounds, or haymaking or any light fieldwork; houses which, though poorest of all, are by no means the most dirty or uncared for. Of course there are dozens of others literally overflowing with children, children in the cradle, children on the floor, children on the threshold, children on the "midden" outside; rosy, bright, merry children, who thrive with the smallest possible share of buttermilk and stirabout, are utterly innocent of shoes and stockings, and learn at school all that is taught to them at least half as fast

again as a tribe of little Saxons. Several of them in Balisk are the adopted children of the people who provide for them. First sent down by their parents (generally domestic servants) to be nursed in that salubrious spot, after a year or two it generally happened that the pay ceased, the parent was not heard of, and the foster-mother and father would no more have thought of sending the child to the Poor-house than of sending it to the moon. The Poor-house, indeed, occupied a very small space in the imagination of the people of Balisk. It was beyond Purgatory, and hardly more real. Not that the actual institution was conducted on other than the very mildest principles, but there was a fearful Ordeal by Water—in the shape of a warm bath—to be undergone on entrance; there were large rooms with glaring windows, admitting a most uncomfortable degree of light, and never shaded by any broken hats or petticoats; there were also stated hours and rules thoroughly disgusting to the Celtic mind, and, lastly, for the women, there were caps without borders!

Yes! cruelty had gone so far (masculine guardians, however compassionate, little recking the woe they caused), till at length a wail arose—a clamour—almost a Rebellion! "Would they make them wear caps without borders?" The stern heart of manhood relented, and answered "No!"

But I must return to Balisk. Does any one ask, was nothing done to ameliorate the condition of that wretched place? Certainly; at all events there was much attempted. Mrs. Evans, of Portrane, of whom I shall say more by and by, built and endowed capital schools for both boys and girls, and pensioned some of the poorest of the old people. My father having a wholesome horror of pauperising, tried hard at more complete reforms, by giving regular employment to as many as possible, and aiding all efforts to improve the houses. Not being the landlord of Balisk, however, he could do nothing effectually, nor enforce any kind of sanitary

measures; so that while his own villages were neat, trim and healthy, poor Balisk went on year after year deserving the epithet it bore among us, of the Slough of Despond. The failures of endeavours to mend it would form a chapter of themselves. On one occasion my eldest brother undertook the true task for a Hercules; to drain, *not* the stables of Augeas, but the town of Balisk. The result was that his main drain was found soon afterwards effectually stopped up by the dam of an old beaver bonnet. Again, he attempted to whitewash the entire village, but many inhabitants objected to whitewash. Of course when any flood, or snow, or storm came (and what wintry month did they not come in Ireland ?) I went to see the state of affairs at Balisk, and provide what could be provided. And of course when anybody was born, or married, or ill, or dead, or going to America, in or from Balisk, embassies were sent to Newbridge seeking assistance; money for burial or passage; wine, meat, coals, clothes; and (strange to say), in cases of death—always jam! The connection between dying and wanting raspberry jam remained to the last a mystery, but whatever was its nature, it was invariable. "Mary Keogh," or "Peter Reilly," as the case might be, "isn't expected, and would be very thankful for some jam;" was the regular message. Be it remarked that Irish delicacy has suggested the euphuism of "isn't expected" to signify that a person is likely to die. What it is that he or she "is not expected" to do, is never mentioned. When the supplicant was not supposed to be personally known at Newbridge, or a little extra persuasion was thought needful to cover too frequent demands, it was commonly urged that the petitioner was a "poor orphant," commonly aged thirty or forty, or else a "desolate widow." The word desolate, however, being always pronounced "dissolute," the epithet proved less affecting than it was intended to be. But absurd as their

words might sometimes be (and sometimes, on the contrary, they were full of touching pathos and simplicity), the wants of the poor souls were only too real, as we very well knew, and it was not often that a petitioner from Balisk to Newbridge went empty away.

But such help was only of temporary avail. The Famine came and things grew worse. In poor families, that is, families where there was only one man to earn and five or six mouths to feed, the best wages given in the country proved insufficient to buy the barest provision of food; wheat-meal for "griddle" bread, oatmeal for stirabout, turnips to make up for the lost potatoes. Strong men fainted at their work in the fields, having left untasted for their little children the food they needed so sorely. Beggars from the more distressed districts (for Balisk was in one of those which suffered least in Ireland) swarmed through the country, and rarely, at the poorest cabin, asked in vain for bread. Often and often have I seen the master or mistress of some wretched hovel bring out the "griddle cake," and give half of it to some wanderer, who answered simply with a blessing and passed on. Once I remember passing by the house of a poor widow, who had seven children of her own, and as if that were not enough, had adopted an orphan left by her sister. At her cabin door one day, I saw, propped up against her knees, a miserable "traveller," a wanderer from what a native of Balisk would call "other nations; a bowzy villiain from other nations," that is to say, a village eight or ten miles away. The traveller lay senseless, starved to the bone and utterly famine-stricken. The widow tried tenderly to make him swallow a spoonful of bread and water, but he seemed unable to make the exertion. A few drops of whiskey by and by restored him to consciousness. The poor "bowzy" leaned his head on his hands and muttered feebly, "Glory be to God"! The

widow looked up, rejoicing, "Glory be to God, he's saved anyhow." Of course all the neighbouring gentry joined in extensive soup-kitchens and the like, and by one means or other the hard years of famine were passed over.

Then came the Fever, in many ways a worse scourge than the famine. Of course it fell heavily on such ill-drained places as Balisk. After a little time, as each patient remained ill for many weeks, it often happened that three or four were in the fever in the same cabin, or even all the family at once, huddled in the two or three beds, and with only such attendance as the kindly neighbours, themselves overburdened, could supply. Soon it became universally known that recovery was to be effected only by improved food and wine; not by drugs. Those whose condition was already good, and who caught the fever, invariably died; those who were in a depressed state, if they could be raised, were saved. It became precisely a question of life and death how to supply nourishment to all the sick. As the fever lasted on and on, and re-appeared time after time, the work was difficult, seeing that no stores of any sort could ever be safely intrusted to Irish prudence and frugality.

Then came Smith O'Brien's rebellion. The country was excited. In every village (Balisk nowise behindhand) certain clubs were formed, popularly called "Cutthroat Clubs," for the express purpose of purchasing pikes and organising the expected insurrection in combination with leaders in Dublin. Head-Centre of the club of Balisk was the ex-schoolmaster, of whom we have already spoken. How he obtained that honour I know not; possibly because he could write, which most probably was beyond the achievements of any other member of the institution; possibly also because he claimed to be the lawful owner of the adjoining estate of Newbridge. How the schoolmaster's claim was proved to the satisfaction of himself and his friends is a secret which, if revealed, would

probably afford a clue to much of Irish ambition. Nearly every parish in Ireland has thus its lord *de facto*, who dwells in a handsome house in the midst of a park, and another lord who dwells in a mud-cabin in the village and is fully persuaded he is the lord *de jure*. In the endless changes of ownership and confiscation to which Irish land has been subjected, there is always some heir of one or other of the dispossessed families, who, if nothing had happened that did happen, and nobody had been born of a score or two of persons who somehow, unfortunately, were actually born, then he or she might, could, would, or should have inherited the estate. In the present case my ancestor had purchased the estate some 150 years before from another English family who had held it for some generations. When and where the poor Celtic schoolmaster's forefathers had come upon the field none pretended to know. Anxious, however, to calm the minds of his neighbours, my father thought fit to address them in a paternal manifesto, posted about the different villages, entreating them to forbear from entering the "Cutthroat Clubs," and pointing the moral of the recent death of the Archbishop of Paris at the barricades. The result of this step was that the newspaper, then published in Dublin under the audacious name of *The Felon*, devoted half a column to exposing my father by name to the hatred of good Clubbists, and pointing him out as "one of the very first for whose benefit the pikes were procured." Boxes of pikes were accordingly actually sent by the railway before mentioned, and duly delivered to the Club; and still the threat of rebellion rose higher, till even calm people like ourselves began to wonder whether it were a volcano on which we were treading, or the familiar mud of Balisk.

Newbridge, as described in the first chapter of this book, bore some testimony to the troubles of the last century when it was erected. There was a long corridor which had once

been all hung with weapons, and there was a certain board in the floor of an inner closet which could be taken up when desirable, and beneath which appeared a large receptacle wherein the aforesaid weapons were stored in times of danger. Stories of '98 were familiar to us from infancy. There was the story of Le Hunts of Wexford, when the daughter of the family dreamed three times that the guns in her father's hall were all broken and, on inducing Colonel Le Hunt to examine them, the dream was found to be true and his own butler the traitor. Horrible stories were there, also, of burnings and cardings (*i.e.*, tearing the back with the iron comb used in carding wool); and nursery threats of rebels coming up back stairs on recalcitrant "puckhawns" (naughty children—children of Puck), insomuch that to "play at rebellion" had been our natural resource as children. Born and bred in this atmosphere, it seemed like a bad dream come true that there were actual pikes imported into well-known cabins, and that there were in the world men stupid and wicked enough to wish to apply them to those who laboured constantly for their benefit. Yet the papers teemed with stories of murders of good and just landlords; yet threats each day more loud, came with every post of what Smith O'Brien and his friends would do if they but succeeded in raising the peasantry, alas! all too ready to be raised. Looking over the miserable fiasco of that "cabbage garden" rebellion now, it seems all too ridiculous to have ever excited the least alarm. But at that time, while none could doubt the final triumph of England, it was very possible to doubt whether aid could be given by the English Government before every species of violence might be committed by the besotted peasantry at our gates.

I have been told on good authority that Smith O'Brien made his escape from the police in the "habit" of an Anglican Sisterhood, of which his sister, Hon. Mrs. Monsell, was Superior.

A little incident which occurred at the moment rather confirmed the idea that Balisk was transformed for the nonce into a little Hecla; not under snow, but mud. I was visiting the fever patients, and was detained late of a summer's evening in the village. So many were ill, there seemed no end of sick to be supplied with food, wine and other things needed. In particular, three together were ill in a house already mentioned, where there were several grown-up sons, and the people were somewhat better off than usual, though by no means sufficiently so to be able to procure meat or similar luxuries. Here I lingered, questioning and prescribing, till at about nine o'clock my visit ended; and I left money to procure some of the things required. Next morning my father addressed me:—

"So you were at Balisk last night?"

"Yes, I was kept there."

"You stayed in Tyrell's house till nine o'clock?"

"Yes; how do you know?"

"You gave six and sixpence to the mother to get provisions?"

"Yes; how *do* you know?"

"Well, very simply. The police were watching the door and saw you through it. As soon as you were gone the Club assembled there. They were waiting for your departure; and the money you gave was subscribed to buy pikes; of course *to pike me!*"

A week later, the bubble burst in the memorable Cabbage-garden. The rebel chiefs were leniently dealt with by the Government, and their would-be rebel followers fell back into all the old ways as if nothing had happened. What became of the pikes no one knew. Possibly they exist in Balisk still, waiting for a Home Rule Government to be brought forth. At the end of a few months the poor schoolmaster, claimant of Newbridge, died; and as I stood by his bedside and gave

him the little succour possible, the poor fellow lifted his eyes full of meaning, and said, "To think *you* should come to help me now!" It was the last reference made to the once-dreaded rebellion.

After endless efforts my brother carried his point and drained the whole village—beaver bonnets notwithstanding. Whitewash became popular. "Middens" (as the Scotch call them, the Irish have a simpler phrase) were placed more frequently behind houses than in front of them. Costume underwent some vicissitudes, among which the introduction of shoes and stockings, among even the juvenile population, was the most remarkable feature; a great change truly, since I can remember an old woman, to whom my youngest brother had given a pair, complaining that she had caught cold in consequence of wearing, for the first time in her life, those superfluous garments.

Many were drawn into the stream of the Exodus, and have left the country. How helpless they are in their migrations, poor souls! was proved by one sad story. A steady, good young woman, whose sister had settled comfortably in New York, resolved to go out to join her, and for the purpose took her passage at an Emigration Agency office in Dublin. Coming to make her farewell respects at Newbridge, the following conversation ensued between her and myself:

"So, Bessie, you are going to America?"

"Yes, ma'am, to join Biddy at New York. She wrote for me to come, and sent the passage-money."

"That is very good of her. Of course you have taken your passage direct to New York?"

"Well, no, ma'am. The agent said there was no ship going to New York, but one to some place close by, New-something-else."

"New-son ething-else, near New York; I can't think where that could be."

"Yes, ma'am, New—New—I disremember what it was, but he told me I could get from it to New York immadiently."

"Oh, Bessie, it wasn't New Orleans?"

"Yes, ma'am, that was it! New Orleans—New Orleans, close to New York, he said."

"And you have paid your passage-money?"

"Yes, ma'am, I must go there anyhow, now."

"Oh, Bessie, Bessie, why would you never come to school and learn geography? You are going to a terrible place, far away from your sister. That wicked agent has cheated you horribly."

The poor girl went to New Orleans, and there died of fever. The birds of passage and fish which pass from sea to sea seem more capable of knowing what they are about than the greater number of the emigrants driven by scarcely less blind an instinct. Out of the three millions who are said to have gone since the famine from Ireland to America, how many must there have been who had no more knowledge than poor Bessie Mahon of the land to which they went!

Before I conclude these reminiscences of Irish peasant life in the Forties, I must mention an important feature of it—the Priests. Most of those whom I saw in our villages were disagreeable-looking men with the coarse mouth and jaw of the Irish peasant undisguised by the beards and whiskers worn by their lay brethren; and often the purple and bloated appearance of their cheeks suggested too abundant diet of bacon and whisky-punch. They worried me dreadfully by clearing out all the Catholic children from my school every now and then on the pretence of withdrawing them from heretical instruction, though nothing was further from the thoughts or wishes of any of us than proselytizing; nor was a single charge ever formulated against our teachers of saying a word to the children against their religion. What the

priests really wanted was to obstruct education itself and too close and friendly intercourse with Protestants. For several winters I used to walk down to the school on certain evenings in the week and give the older lads and lassies lessons in Geography (with two huge maps of the world which I made myself, 11 ft. by 9 ft. !) and the first steps in Astronomy and history. Several times, when the class had been well got together and began to be interested, the priest announced that *he* would give them lessons on the same night, and they were to come to him instead of to me. Of course I told them to do so, and that I was very glad he would take the trouble. A fortnight or so later however I always learnt that the priest's lessons had dropped and all was to be recommenced.

The poor woman I mentioned above as so devoted to her mother went to service with one of the priests in the neighbourhood in the hope that she would receive religious consolation from him. Meeting her some time after I expressed my hope that she had found it. "Ah, no Ma'am!" she answered sorrowfully, "He never spakes to me unless about the bacon or the like of that. *Priests does be dark!*" I thought the phrase wonderfully significant.

My father, though a Protestant of the Protestants as the reader has learned, thought it right to send regularly every year a cheque to the priest of Donabate as an aid to his slender resources; and there never was *openly*, anything but civility between the successive *curés* and ourselves. We bowed most respectfully to each other on the roads, but I never interchanged a word with any of them save once when I was busy attending a poor woman in Balisk in the cramps of cholera; the disease being at the time raging through the country. With the help of the good souls who in Ireland are always ready for any charitable deed, I was applying mustard poultices, when Father M—— entered the cabin (a revolting

looking man he was, whose nose had somehow been frost-bitten), and turned me out. I implored him to defer, or at least hasten his ministrations; and stood outside the door in great impatience for half an hour while I knew the hapless patient was in agony and peril of death, inside. At last the priest came out,—and when I hurried back to the bedside I found he had been gumming some "Prayers to the Holy Virgin" on the wall. Happily we were not too late with our mustard and "sperrits," and the woman was saved; whether by Father M—— and the Virgin or by me I cannot pretend to say.

I have spoken of our village school and must add that the boys and girls who attended it were exceedingly clever and bright. They caught up ideas, were moved by heroic or pathetic stories and understood jokes to a degree quite unmatched by English children of the same humble class, as I found later when I taught in Miss Carpenter's Ragged Schools at Bristol. The ingenuity with which, when they came to a difficult word in reading, they substituted another was very diverting. One boy read that St. John had a leathern *griddle* about his loins; and a young man with a deep manly voice, once startled me by announcing, "He casteth out divils through,—through, through,—*Blazes*, the chief of the Divils!"

In Drumcar school a child, elaborately instructed by dear, good Lady Elizabeth M'Clintock concerning Pharisees, and then examined:—"What was the sin of the Pharisees?" replied promptly: "*Ating camels*, my lady!"

Alas, I have reason to fear that the erudition of my little scholars, if quickly obtained, was far from durable. Paying a visit to my old home ten years later I asked my crack scholar, promoted to be second gardener at Newbridge, "Well, Andrew, how much do you remember of all my lessons?"

"Ah, Ma'am, then, never a word!"

"O, Andrew, Andrew! And have you forgotten all about the sun, the moon and stars, the day and night, and the Seasons?"

"O, no, Ma'am! I do remember now, and you set them on the school-room table, and Mars was a red gooseberry, and I ate him!"

# CHAPTER VII.

## *IRELAND IN THE FORTIES.*

### *THE GENTRY.*

## CHAPTER VII.

### Ireland in the Forties.

*Continued.*

I now turn to describe, as my memory may serve, the life of the Irish gentry in the Forties. There never has been much of a middle class, unhappily, in the country, and therefore in speaking of the gentry I shall have in view mostly the landowners and their families. These, with few and always much noted exceptions, were Protestants, of English descent and almost exclusively of Saxon blood; the Anglo-Irish families however long settled in Ireland, naturally intermarrying chiefly with each other. So great was, in my time, the difference in outward looks between the two races, that I have often remarked that I could walk down Sackville Street and point to each passenger "Protestant," "Catholic," "Protestant," "Catholic"; and scarcely be liable to make a mistake.

As I have said, my memory bridges over the gulf between a very typical *ancien régime* household and the present order of things, and I may be able to mark some changes, not unworthy of registration. But it must be understood that I make no attempt to describe what would be precisely called *Irish society*, for into this, I never really entered at all. I wearied of the little I had seen of it after a few balls and drawing-rooms in Dublin by the time I was eighteen and thenceforward only shared in home entertainments and dinners among neighbours in our own county, with a few visits to relatives at greater distance. I believe the origin of my great boredom in Dublin balls (for I

was very fond of dancing) was the extraordinary inanity of the men whom I met. The larger number were officers of Horse Artillery, then under the command of my uncle, and I used to pity the poor youths, thinking that they danced with me as in duty bound, while their really marvellous silliness and dulness made conversation wearisome in the extreme. Many of these same empty-headed young coxcombs afterwards fought like Trojans through the Crimean War and came back,—transformed into heroes! I remember my dentist telling me, much to the same purpose, that half the officers in the garrison had come to him to have their teeth looked after before they went to the Crimea and had behaved abominably in his chair of torture, groaning and moaning and occasionally vituperating him and kicking his shins. But it was another story when some of those very men charged at Balaklava! We are not, I think, yet advanced far enough to dispense altogether with the stern teaching of war, or the virtues which spring out of the dreadful dust of the battlefield.

Railways were only beginning to be opened in 1840, and were much dreaded by landed proprietors through whose lands they ran. When surveyors came to plan the Dublin and Drogheda Railway my father and our neighbour Mrs. Evans, were up in arms and our farmers ready to throttle the trespassers. I suggested we should erect a Notice-board in Donabate with this inscription :—

> "Survey the world from China to Peru;
> Survey not here,—we'll shoot you if you do."

The voyage to England, which most of us undertook at least once or twice a year, was a wretched transit in miserable, ill-smelling vessels. From Dublin to Bristol (our most convenient route) took at least thirty hours. From Holyhead to London was a two days' journey by coach. On one of these journeys, having to stop at Bristol for two nights, I

enjoyed an opportunity (enchanting at sixteen) of being swung in a basket backward and forward across the Avon, where the Suspension Bridge now stands. Preparations for these journeys of ours to England were not quite so serious as those which were necessarily made for our cousins when they went out to India and were obliged for five or six months wholly to dispense with the services of a laundress. Still, our hardships were considerable, and youngsters who were going to school or college were made up like little Micawbers "expecting dirty weather." Elderly ladies, I remember, usually travelled in mourning and sometimes kept their little corkscrew curls in paper under their bonnet caps for the whole journey; a less distressing proceeding, however, than that of Lady Cahir thirty years earlier, who had her hair dressed, (powdered and on a cushion) by a famous hairdresser in Bath, and came over to exhibit it at St. Patrick's ball in Dublin Castle, having passed five nights at sea, desperately ill, but heroically refusing to lie down and disarrange the magnificent structure on her aching head.

This lady by the way—of whom it was said that "Lady Cahir *cares* for no man"—had had a droll adventure in her youth, which my mother, who knew her well and I think was her schoolfellow, recounted to me. Before she married she lived with her mother, a rather extravagant widow, who plunged heavily into debt. One day the long-expected bailiffs came to arrest her and were announced as at the hall door. Quick as lightning Lady Cahir (then, I think, Miss Townsend) made her mother exchange dress and cap with her, to which she added the old lady's wig and spectacles and then sat in her armchair knitting sedulously, with the blinds drawn down and her back to the window. The mother having vanished, the bailiff was shown up, and, exhibiting his credentials, requested the lady to accompany him to the sponging house. Of course there was a long palaver; but at last the captive

consented to obey and merely said, "Well! I will go if you like, but I warn you that you are committing a great mistake in apprehending me."

"O, O! We all know about that, Ma'am! Please come along! I have a hackney carriage at the door."

The damsel, well wrapped in cloaks and furbelows and a great bonnet of the period, went quietly to her destination; but when the time came for closing the door on her as a prisoner, she jumped up, threw off wig, spectacles and old woman's cap, and disclosed the blue eyes, golden hair, and radiant young beauty for which she was long afterwards renowned. Meanwhile, of course, her mother had had abundance of time to clear out of the way of her importunate creditors.

Many details of comforts and habits in those days were very much in arrear of ours, perhaps about equally in Ireland and in England. It is droll to remember, for example, as I do vividly, seeing in my childhood the housemaids striving with infinite pains and great loss of time to obtain a light with steel and flint and a tinder-box, when by some untoward accident all the fires in the house (habitually burning all night) had been extinguished.

The first matchbox I saw was a long upright red one containing a bottle of phosphorus and a few matches which were lighted by insertion in the bottle. After this we had Lucifers which nearly choked us with gas; but in which we gloried as among the greatest discoveries of all time. Seriously I believe few of the vaunted triumphs of science have contributed so much as these easy illuminators of our long dark Northern nights to the comfort and health of mankind.

Again our grandmothers had used exquisite China basins with round long-necked jugs for all their ablutions and we had advanced to the use of large basins and footpans, slipper

baths and shower baths, when, as nearly as possible in 1840, the first sponge bath was brought to Ireland. I was paying a visit to my father's cousin, Lady Elizabeth McClintock, at Drumcar in Co. Louth, when she exhibited with pride to me and her other guests the novel piece of bedroom furniture. When I returned home and described it my mother ordered a supply for our house, and we were wont for a long time to enquire of each other, "how we enjoyed our tubs?" as people are now supposed to ask: "Have you used Pears' soap?" I believe it was from India these excellent inventions came.

Many other differences might be noted between the habits of those days and of ours. *Diners Russes* were, of course, not thought of. We dined at six, or six-thirty, at latest; and after the soup and fish, all the first course was placed at once on the table. For a party, for example, of 16 or 18, there would be eight dishes; joints, fowls and entrées. It was a triumph of good cookery, but really achieved, to serve them all hot at once. Tea, made with an urn, was a regular meal taken in the drawing-room about nine o'clock; *never* before dinner. The modern five o'clock tea was altogether unknown in the Forties, and when I ventured sometimes to introduce it in the Fifties, I was so severely reprehended that I used to hold a secret symposium for specially favoured guests in my own room after our return from drives or walks. All old gentlemen pronounced five o'clock tea an atrocious and disgraceful practice.

Another considerable difference in our lives was caused by the scarcity of newspapers and periodicals. I can remember when the *Dublin Evening Mail*,—then a single sheet, appearing three times a week and received at Newbridge on the day after publication,—was our only source of news. I do not think any one of our neighbours took the *Times* or any English paper. Of magazines we had *Blackwood* and the *Quarterly*, but illustrated ones were

unknown. There was a tolerable circulating library in Dublin, to which I subscribed and from whence I obtained a good many French books; but the literary appetites of the Irish gentry generally were frugal in the extreme!

The real differences, however, between Life in 1840 and Life in 1890 were much deeper than any record of these altered manners, or even any references to the great changes caused by steam and the telegraph, can convey. There were certain principles which in those days were almost universally accepted and which profoundly influenced all our works and ways. The first of them was Parental and Marital Authority. Perhaps my particular circumstances as the daughter of a man of immense force of will, caused me to see the matter especially clearly, but I am sure that in the Thirties and Forties (at all events in Ireland) there was very little declension generally from the old Roman *Patria Potestas*. Fathers believed themselves to possess almost boundless rights over their children in the matter of pursuits, professions, marriages and so on; and the children usually felt that if they resisted any parental command it was on their peril and an act of extreme audacity. My brothers and I habitually spoke of our father, as did the servants and tenants, as "*The Master;*" and never was title more thoroughly deserved.

Another important difference was in the position of women. Of this I shall have more to say hereafter; suffice it to note that it was the universal opinion, that no gentlewoman could possibly earn money without derogating altogether from her rank (unless, indeed, by card-playing as my grandmother did regularly!); and that housekeeping and needlework (of the most inartistic kinds) were her only fitting pursuits. The one natural ambition of her life was supposed to be a "suitable" marriage; the phrase always referring to *settlements*, rather than *sentiments*. Study of any serious sort was disapproved, and "accomplishments"

only were cultivated. My father prohibited me when very young from learning Latin from one of my brothers who kindly offered to teach me; but, as I have recounted, he paid largely and generously that I might be taught Music, for which I had no faculties at all. Other Irish girls my contemporaries, were much worse off than I, for my dear mother always did her utmost to help my studies and my liberal allowance permitted me to buy books.

The laws which concerned women at that date were so frightfully unjust that the most kindly disposed men inevitably took their cue from them, and looked on their mothers, wives, and sisters as beings with wholly inferior rights; with *no* rights, indeed, which should ever stand against theirs. The *deconsideration* of women (as dear Barbara Bodichon in later years used to say) was at once cause and result of our legal disabilities. Let the happier women of these times reflect on the state of things which existed when a married woman's inheritance and even her own earnings (if she could make any), were legally robbed from her by her husband, and given, if he pleased, to his mistress! Let them remember that she could make no will, but that her husband might make one which should bequeath the control of her children to a man she abhorred or to a woman of evil life. Let them remember that a husband who had beaten and wronged his wife in every possible way could yet force her by law to live with him and become the mother of his children. Personally and most fortunately (for I know not of what crime I might not have been guilty if so tried!) I never had cause of complaint on the score of injustice or unkindness from any of the men with whom I had to do. But the knowledge, when it came to me, of the legalised oppressions under which other women groaned, lay heavy on my mind. I was not, however, in those early days, interested in politics or

large social reforms; and did not covet the political franchise, finding in my manifold duties and studies over-abundant outlets for my energies.

Another difference between the first and latter half of the century is, I think, the far greater simplicity of character of the older generation. No doubt there were, at the time of which I write, many fine and subtle minds at work among the poets, philosophers and statesmen of the day; but ordinary ladies and gentlemen, even clever and well-educated ones, would, I think, if they could revive now, seem to us rather like our boys and girls than our grandparents. Thousands of allusions, ideas, shades of sentiment and reflection which have become common-places to us, were novel and strange to them. What Cowper's poetry is to Tennyson's, what the *Vicar of Wakefield* is to *Middlemarch*, so were their transparent minds to ours. I remember once (for a trivial example of what I mean) walking with my father in his later days in the old garden one exquisite spring day when the apple trees were covered with blossoms and the birds were singing all round us. As he leaned on my arm, having just recovered from an illness which had threatened to be fatal and was in a mood unusually tender, I was tempted to say, "Don't you feel, Father, that a day like this is almost too beautiful and delicious, that it softens one's feelings to the verge of pain?" In these times assuredly such a remark would have seemed to most people too obvious to deserve discussion, but it only brought from my father the reply: "God bless my soul, what nonsense you talk, my dear! I never heard the like. Of course a fine day makes everybody cheerful and a rainy day makes us dull and dismal." Everyone I knew then, was, more or less, similarly simple; and in some of the ablest whom I met in later years of the same generation, (*e.g.*, Mrs. Somerville) I found the same single-mindedness, the same absence of all experience of the subtler emotions Conversa-

tion, as a natural consequence, was more downright and matter of fact, and rarely if ever was concerned with critical analyses of impressions. In short, (as I have said) our fathers were in many respects, like children compared to ourselves.

Another and a sad change has taken place in the amount of animal spirits generally shared by young and old in the Thirties and Forties and down, I think, to the Crimean War, which brought a great seriousness into all our lives. It was not only the young who laughed in joyous "fits" in those earlier days; the old laughed then more heartily and more often than I fear many young people do now; that blessed laugh of hearty amusement which causes the eyes to water and the sides to ache—a laugh one hardly ever hears now in any class or at any age. An evidence of the high level of ordinary spirits may be found in the readiness with which such genuine laughter responded to the smallest provocation. It did not need the delightful farce of the Keeley's acting (though I recall the helpless state into which Mr. Keeley's pride in his red waistcoat reduced half the house), but even an old, well-worn, good story, or family catch-word with some ludicrous association, was enough to provoke jovial mirth. It was part of a young lady's and young gentleman's home training to learn how to indulge in the freest enjoyment of fun without boisterousness or shrieks or discordance of any kind. Young people were for ever devising pranks and jests among themselves, and even their seniors occupied themselves in concocting jokes, many of which we should now think childish; the order of the "April Fool," being the general type. Comic verse making; forging of love letters; disguising and begging as tramps; sending boxes of bogus presents; making "ghosts" with bolsters and burnt cork eyes to be placed in dark corners of passages; these and a score of such monkey-tricks for which nobody now has patience, were common diversions in

every household, and were nearly always taken good-humouredly. My father used to tell of one ridiculous deception in which the chief actress and inventor was that very *grande dame* Elizabeth Hastings, Countess of Moira, daughter of the Methodist Countess of Huntingdon. Lady Moira, my father and two other young men, by means of advertising and letters, induced some wretched officer to walk up and down a certain part of Sackville Street for an hour with a red geranium in his buttonhole, to show himself off, as he thought, to a young lady with a large fortune who proposed to marry him. The conspirators sat in a window across the street watching their victim and exploding with glee at his peacock behaviour. The sequel was better than the joke. The poor man wrote a letter to his tormentress (whom he had at last detected) so pitiful that her kind heart melted, and she exerted her immense influence effectually on his behalf and provided for him comfortably for life.

Henry, the third Marquis of Waterford, husband of the gifted and beautiful lady whose charming biography Mr. Hare has recently written, was the last example I imagine in Ireland of these redundant spirits. It was told of him, and I remember hearing of it at the time, that a somewhat grave and self-important gentleman had ridden up to Curraghmore on business and left his bay horse at the door. Lord Waterford, seeing the animal, caught up a pot of whitewash in use by some labourer and rapidly *whitewashed the horse;* after which exploit he went indoors to interview his visitor, and began by observing, "That is a handsome grey horse of yours at the door." "A bay, my Lord."

"Not at all. It is a grey horse. I saw you on it."

Eventually both parties adjourned to the front of the house and found the whitewashed hore walking up and down with a groom. "You see it is grey," said the Marquis triumphantly.

Certainly no one in those days dreamed of asking the question, "Is Life worth Living?" We were all, young and old, quite sure that life was extremely valuable; a boon for which to be grateful to God. I recall the amazement with which I first read of the Buddhist and Brahmin Doctrine that Existence is *per se* an evil, and that the reward of the highest virtue will be Absorption, or Nirvana. The pessimism which prevails in this *fin de siècle* was as unknown in the Forties as the potato disease before the great blight.

I much wish that some strong thinker would undertake the useful task of tracking this mental and moral *anæmia* of the present generation to its true origin, whether that origin be the ebb of religious hope and faith and the reaction from the extreme and too hasty optimism which culminated in 1851, and has fallen rapidly since 1875, or whether, in truth, our bodily conditions, though tending to prolong life and working power to an amazing degree, are yet less conducive to the development of the sanguine and hilarious temperament common in my youth. I have heard as a defence for the revolution which has taken place in medical treatment—from the depletory and antiphlogistic to the nourishing and stimulating, and for the total abandonment of the practice of bleeding—that it is not the doctors who have altered their minds, but the patients, whose bodies have undergone a profound modification. I can quite recall the time when (as all the novels of the period testify), if anybody had a fall or a fit, or almost any other mishap, it was the first business of the doctor to whip out his lancet, bare the sufferer's arm, and draw a large quantity of blood, when everybody and the aforesaid novels always remarked; "It was providential that there was a doctor at hand" to do it. I have myself seen this operation performed on one of my brothers in our drawing-room about 1836, and I heard of it every day occurring

among our neighbours, rich and poor. My father's aunt, whom I well remember, Jane Power Trench (sister of the first Lord Clancarty), who lived in Marlborough Buildings in Bath, was habitually bled every year just before Easter, having previously spent the entire winter in her bed-room of which the windows were pasted down and the doors doubled. A few days after the phlebotomy the old lady invariably bought a new bonnet and walked in it up to the top of Beacon Hill. She continued the annual ritual unbroken till she died at 79. Surely these people were made of stronger *pâte* than we? In corroboration of this theory I may record how much more hardy were the gentlemen of the Forties in all their habits than are those of the Nineties. When my father and his friends went on grouse-shooting expeditions to our mountain-lodge, I used to provide for the large parties only abundance of plain food for dinners, and for luncheons merely sandwiches, bread and cheese, with a keg of ale, and a basket of apples. By degrees it became necessary (to please my brother's guests) to provide the best of fish, fowl and flesh, champagne and peaches. The whole odious system of *battues*, rendering sport unmanly as well as cruel, with all its attendant waste and cost and disgusting butchery, has grown up within my recollection by the extension of luxury, laziness and ostentation.

To turn to another subject. There was very little immorality at that time in Ireland either in high or low life, and what there was received no quarter. But there was, certainly, together with the absence of vice, a lack of some of the virtues which have since developed amongst us. It is not easy to realise that in my life-time men were hanged for forgery and for sheep-stealing; and that no one agitated for the repeal of such Draconian legislation, but everybody placidly repeated the observation (now-a-days so constantly applied to the scientific torture of animals), that it was

"NECESSARY." Cruelties, wrongs and oppressions of all kinds were rife, and there were (in Ireland at all events) none to raise an outcry such as would echo now from one end of England to the other.

The Protestant pulpit was occupied by two distinct classes of men. There were the younger sons of the gentry and nobles, who took the large livings and were booked for bishoprics; and these were educated at Oxford and Cambridge, were more or less cultivated men and associated of course on equal terms with the best in the land. Not seldom they were men of noble lives, and extreme piety; such for example, was the last Protestant Archbishop of Tuam, and a certain Archdeacon Trench, who I remember regarding with awe and curiosity since I had heard that he had once got up into his own pulpit, and (like Maxwell Gray's *Dean Maitland*) made a public confession of all his life's misdoings. The second class of Irish clergymen in those days were men of quite a lower social grade, educated in Trinity College, often, no doubt, of excellent character and devotion but generally extremely narrow in their views, conducting all controversies by citations of isolated Bible-texts and preaching to their sparse country congregations with Dublin brogues which, not seldom, reduced the sublimity of their subjects to bathos. There was one, for example, who said, as the peroration of his sermon on the Fear of Death:—

"Me brethren the doying Christian lepps into the arrums of Death and makes his hollow jaws ring with eternal hallelujahs!"

I have myself heard another read the concluding chapters of the gospels, substituting with extraordinary effect the words "two Meal-factors," for the "two malefactors," who were crucified. There was a chapter in the Acts which we dreaded to hear, so difficult was it to help laughing when we were told of "*Perthians* and *Mades*, and the dwellers in

*Mesopotemia* and the parts of Libya about *Cyraine*, streengers of *Roum*, Jews and Proselytes, *Crates* and Arabians." It was also hard to listen gravely to a vivid description of Jonah's catastrophe, as I have heard it, thus: "The weves bate against the ship, and the ship bate against the weves;" (and, at last) "The Wheel swallowed Jonah!"

They had a difficult place to hold, these humbler Irish clergymen, properly associating with no class of their parishioners; but to their credit be it said, they were nearly all men of blameless lives, who did their duty as they understood it, fairly well. The disestablishment of the Irish Church which I had regarded beforehand with much prejudice, did (I have since been inclined to think), very little mischief, and certainly awakened in the minds of the Irish squirearchy who had to settle their creed afresh, an interest in theology which was never exhibited in my earlier days. I was absolutely astounded on paying a visit to my old home a few years after disestablishment and while the Convention (commonly called the *Contention!*) was going on, to hear sundry recondite mysteries discussed at my brother's table and to find some of my old dancing partners actually greedily listening to what I could tell them of the then recent discovery of Mr. Edmund Ffoulkes,—that the doctrine of the Double Procession of the Holy Ghost had been invented by King Reccared.

As regards any moral obligation or duty owed by men and women to the lower animals, such ideas were as yet scarcely beginning to be recognised. It was in 1822, the year in which I was born, that brave old Richard Martin carried in Parliament the first Act ever passed by any legislature in the world on behalf of the brutes. Tom Moore had laughed at this early *Zoophilist*.

"Place me midst O'Rourkes, O'Tooles,
The ragged royal blood of Tara!
Place me where Dick Martin rules
The houseless wilds of Connemara

But in the history of human civilisation, "Martin's Act" will hereafter assuredly hold a distinct place of honour when many a more pompous political piece of legislation is buried in oblivion. For a long time the new law, and the Society for Prevention of Cruelty which arose to work it, were objects of obloquy and jest even from such a man as Sydney Smith, who did his best in the *Edinburgh Review* to sneer them down. But by degrees they formed, as Mr. Lecky says every system of legislation *must* do, a system of *moral education.* A sense of the Rights of Animals has slowly been awakened, and is becoming, by not imperceptible degrees, a new principle of ethics. In my youth there were plenty of good people who were fond of dogs, cats and horses; but nothing in their behaviour, or in that of any one I knew at that time, testified to the existence of any latent idea that it was *morally wrong* to maltreat animals to any extent. Pious sportsmen were wont to scourge their dogs with frightful dog-whips, for any disobedience or mistake, with a savage violence which I shudder to remember; and which I do not think the most brutal men would now exhibit openly. Miss Edgeworth's then recent novel of *Ennui* had described her hero as riding five horses to death to give himself a sensation, without (as it would appear) forfeiting in the author's opinion his claims to the sympathies of the reader. I can myself recall only laughing, not crying as I should be more inclined to do now, at the spectacle of miserable half-starved horses made to gallop in Irish cars to win a bribe for the driver, who flogged them over ruts and stones, shouting (as I have heard them) "Never fare! I'll *batther* him out of that!" The picture of a "*Rosinante*," from Cervantes' time till a dozen or two years ago, instead of being one of the most pathetic objects in the world,—the living symbol of human cruelty,—was always considered a particularly laughable caricature. Only tender-hearted Bewick in his

woodcut, *Waiting for Death*, tried to move the hearts of his generation to compassion for the starved and worn-out servant of ungrateful man.

The Irish peasantry do not habitually maltreat animals, but the frightful mutilations and tortures which of late years they have practised on cattle belonging to their obnoxious neighbours, is one of the worst proofs of the existence in the Celtic character of that undercurrent of ferocity of which I have spoken elsewhere.

Among Irish ladies and gentlemen in the Forties there was a great deal of interest of course in our domestic pets, and I remember a beautiful and beloved young bride coming to pay us a visit, and asking in a tone of profound conviction: "What *would* life be without dogs?" Still there was nothing then existing, I think, in the world like the sentiment which inspired Mathew Arnold's *Geist* or even his "*Kaiser Dead.*" The gulf between the canine race and ours was thought to be measureless. Darwin had not yet written the Descent of Man or made us imagine that "God had made of one blood" at least all the mammals "upon earth." No one dreamed of trying to realise what must be the consciousness of suffering animals; nor did anyone, I think, live under the slightest sense of responsibility for their well-being. Even my dear old friend, Harriet St. Leger, though she was renowned through the county for her attachment to her great black Retrievers, said to me one day, many years after I had left Ireland, "I don't understand your feelings about animals at all. To me a *dog is a dog.* To you it seems to be something else!"

Another difference was, that there was very little popularity-hunting in the Forties. The "working man" was seen, but not yet heard of; and, so far as I remember, we thought as little of the public opinion of our villages respecting us as we did of the public opinion of the stables. The wretched

religious bigotry which, as we knew, made the Catholics look on us as infallibly condemned of God in this world and the next, was an insuperable barrier to sympathy from them, and we never expected them to understand either our acts or motives. But if we cared little or nothing what they thought of us, I must in justice say that we did care a great deal for *their* comfort, and were genuinely unhappy in their afflictions and active to relieve their miseries. When the famine came there was scarcely one Irish lady or gentleman, I think, who did not spend time, money and labour like water to supply food to the needy. I remember the horror with which my father listened to a visitor, who was not an Irishwoman but a purse-proud Welsh heiress married to a half idiotic baronet in our neighbourhood, who told him that her husband's Mayo property had just cost them £70. "That will go some way in supplying Indian meal to your tenants," said my father, supposing that to such purpose it must be devoted. "O dear, no! We are not sending it for any such use," said Lady —. "We are spending it *on evictions!*" "Good God!" shouted my father; "how shocking! At such a time as this!"

It has been people like these who have ever since done the hard things of which so much capital has been made by those whose interest it has been to stir up strife in the "distressful country."

I happen to be able to recall precisely the day, almost the hour, when the blight fell on the potatoes and caused the great calamity. A party of us were driving to a seven o'clock dinner at the house of our neighbour, Mrs. Evans, of Portrane. As we passed a remarkably fine field of potatoes in blossom, the scent came through the open windows of the carriage and we remarked to each other how splendid was the crop. Three or four hours later, as we returned home in the dark, a dreadful smell came from the same field, and we exclaimed,

"Something has happened to those potatoes; they do not smell at all as they did when we passed them on our way out." Next morning there was a wail from one end of Ireland to the other. Every field was black and every root rendered unfit for human food. And there were nearly eight millions of people depending principally upon these potatoes for existence!

The splendid generosity of the English public to us at that time warmed all our Anglo-Irish hearts and cheered us to strain every nerve to feed the people. But the agitators were afraid it would promote too much good feeling between the nations, which would not have suited their game. I myself heard O'Connell in Conciliation Hall (that ill-named place!) endeavour to belittle English liberality. He spoke (a strange figure in the red robes of his Mayoralty and with a little sandy wig on his head) to the following purpose:—

"They have sent you over money in your distress. But do you think they do it for love of you, or because they feel for you, and are sorry for your trouble? Devil a bit! *They are afraid of you!*—that is it! *They are afraid of you.* You are eight millions strong."

It was as wicked a speech as ever man made, but it was never, that I know of, reported or remarked upon. He spoke continually to similar purpose no doubt, in that Hall, where my cousin—afterwards the wife of John Locke, M.P. for Southwark—and I had gone to hear him out of girlish curiosity.

The part played by Anglo-Irish ladies when the great fever which followed the famine came on us, was the same. It became perfectly well known that if any of the upper classes caught the fever, they almost uniformly died. The working people could generally be cured by a total change of diet and abundant meat and wine, but to the others no difference could be made in that way, and numbers of ladies

and gentlemen lost their lives by attending their poor in the disease. It was very infectious, or at least it was easily caught in each locality by those who went into the cabins.

There were few people whom I met in Ireland in those early days whose names would excite any interest in the reader's mind. One was poor Elliot Warburton, the author of the *Crescent and the Cross*, who came many times to Newbridge as an acquaintance of my brother. He was very refined and, as we considered, rather effeminate; but how grand, even sublime, was he in his death! On the burning *Amazon* in mid-Atlantic he refused to take a place in the crowded boats, and was last seen standing alone beside the faithful Captain at the helm as the doomed vessel was wrapped in flames. I have never forgotten his pale, intellectual face and somewhat puny frame, and pictured him thus—a true hero.

His brother, who was commonly known as *Hochelaga*, from the name of his book on Canada, was a hale and genial young fellow, generally popular. One rainy day he was prompted by a silly young lady-guest of ours to sing a series of comic songs in our drawing-room, the point of the jokes turning on the advances of women to men. My dear mother, then old and feeble, after listening quietly for a time, slowly rose from her sofa, walked painfully across the room, and leaning over the piano said in her gentle way a few strong words of remonstrance. She could not bear, she said, that men should ridicule women. Respect and chivalrous feeling for them, even when they were foolish and ill-advised, were the part, she always thought, of a generous man. She would beg Mr. Warburton to choose some other songs for his fine voice. All this was done so gently and with her

sweet, kind smile, that no one could take offence. Mr. Warburton was far from doing so. He was, I could see, touched with tender reverence for his aged monitress, and rising hastily from the piano, made the frankest apologies, which of course were instantly accepted. I have described this trivial incident because I think it illustrates the kind of influence which was exercised by women of the old school of "*decorum*."

Another man who sometimes came to our house, was Dr. Longley, then Bishop of Ripon, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. He was a very charming person, without the slightest episcopal *morgue* or affectation, and with the kindest brown eyes in the world. His wife was niece, and, I believe, eventually heiress, of our neighbour Mrs. Evans; and he and his family spent some summers at Portrane in the Fifties when we had many pleasant parties and picnics. I shall not forget how the Bishop laughed when the young Longleys and I and a few guests of my own, inaugurated some charades, and our party, all in disguise, were announced on our arrival at Portrane, as "Lady Worldly," "Miss Angelina Worldly," "Sir Bumpkin Blunderhead," and the "Cardinal Lord Archbishop of Rheims."

Our word was "Novice." I, as Lady Worldly, in my great-grandmother's petticoat and powdered *toupee*, gave my daughter Angelina a lecture on the desirability of marrying "Sir Bumpkin Blunderhead" who was rich, and of dismissing Captain Algernon who was poor. Sir Bumpkin then made his proposals, to which Angelina emphatically answered "No." In the second scene I met Sir Bumpkin at the gaming table, and fleeced him utterly; the end of his "VICE" being suicide on the adjacent sofa. Angelina then, in horror took the veil, and became a "*No-vice*," duly admitted to her Nunnery by the Cardinal Lord Archbishop

of Rheims (my youngest brother in a superb scarlet dressing gown) who pronounced a Sermon on the pleasures of fasting and going barefoot. Angelina retired to her cell, but was soon disturbed by a voice outside the window (Henry Longley's); and exclaiming "Algernon, beloved Algernon!" a speedy elopement over the back of the sofa concluded the fate of the *Novice* and the charade.

There was another charade in which we held a debate in Parliament on a Motion to "abolish the sun and moon," which amused the bishop to the last degree, especially as we made fun of Joseph Hume's retrenchments; he being a particular friend and frequent guest of our hostess. The abolition of the Sun would, we feared, affect the tax on parasols.

At Ripon, as Dr. Longley told me, the Palace prepared for him (the first bishop of the new see) had, as ornaments of the front of the house, two full-sized stone (or plaster) Angels. One day a visitor asked him: "Pray, my Lord, is it supposed by Divines that Angels wear the order of the Garter?" On inspection it proved that the Ripon Angels had formerly done service as statues of the Queen and Prince Albert, but that wings had been added to fit them for the episcopal residence. Sufficient care, however, had not been taken to efface the insignia of the Most Illustrious Order; and "*Honi soit qui mal y pense*" might be dimly deciphered on the leg of the male celestial visitant.

A lady nearly related to Mrs. Longley, who had married an English nobleman, adopted the views of the Plymouth Brothers (or as all the Mrs. Malaprops of the period invariably styled them, the "Yarmouth Bloaters"), which had burst into sudden notoriety. When her husband died leaving her a very wealthy woman, she thought it her duty to carry out the ideas of her sect by putting down such superfluities of her establishment as horses and carriages, and a well appointed

table. She accordingly wrote to her father and begged him to dispose of all her plate and equipages. Lord C—— made no remonstrance and offered no arguments; and after a year or two he received a letter from his daughter couched in a different strain. She told him that she had now reached the conviction that it was "the will of God that a peeress should live as a peeress," and she begged him to buy for her new carriages and fresh plate. Lord C——'s answer must have been a little mortifying. "I knew, my dear, that you would come sooner or later to your senses. You will find your carriages at your coachmakers and your plate at your bankers."

Mrs. Evans, *née* Sophia Parnell, the aunt of both these ladies, and a great-aunt of Charles Stewart Parnell, was, as I have said, our nearest neighbour and in the later years of my life at Newbridge my very kind old friend. For a long time political differences between my father and her husband, —George Hampden Evans, M.P., who had managed to wrest the county from the Tories,—kept the families apart, but after his death we were pleasantly intimate for many years. She often spoke to me of the Avondale branch of her family, and more than once said: "There is mischief brewing! I am troubled at what is going on at Avondale. My nephew's wife" (the American lady, Delia Stewart) "has a hatred of England, and is educating my nephew, like a little Hannibal, to hate it too!" How true was her foresight there is no need now to rehearse, nor how near that "little Hannibal" came to our Rome! Charles Parnell was very far from being a representative Irishman. He was of purely English extraction, and even in the female line had no drop of Irish blood. His mother, as all the world knows, was an American; his grandmother was one of the Howards of the family of the Earls of Wicklow, his great-grandmother a Brooke, of a branch of the old Cheshire house; and, beyond this lady

again, his grand-dames were Wards and Whitsheds. In short, like other supposed "illustrious Irishmen"—Burke, Grattan, Goldsmith, and Wellington—Mr. Parnell was only one example more of the supremacy of the Anglo-Saxon intellect in every land of its adoption.

Mrs. Evans had known Madame de Stael, Condorcet and many other interesting French people in her youth, and loved the Condorcets warmly. She described to me a stiff, old-fashioned dinner at which she had been present when Madame de Stael was a guest. After dinner, the ladies, having retired to the drawing-room, sat apart from Madame de Stael in terror, and she looked them over with undisguised contempt. After a while she rose and, without asking the consent of the mistress of the house, rang the bell. When the footman appeared, she delivered the startling order: "Tell the gentlemen to come up!" The sensation among the formal and scandalized ladies upstairs, and the gentlemen just settling down to their usual long potations below, may be well imagined.

When her husband died, Mrs. Evans built in his memory a fine Round Tower on the plan and of the size of the best of the old Irish towers. It stands on high ground on what was her deer-park, and is a useful landmark to sailors all along that dangerous coast, where the dreadful wreck of the *Tayleur* took place. On the shore below, under the lofty black cliffs, are several very imposing caverns. In the largest of these, which is lighted from above by a shaft, Mrs. Evans, on one occasion, gave a great luncheon party, at which I was present. The company were all in high spirits and thoroughly enjoying the pigeon-pies and champagne, when some one observed that the tide might soon be rising. Mrs. Evans replied that it was all right, there was plenty of time, and the festival proceeded for another half-hour, when somebody rose and strolled to the mouth of the cavern and soon uttered a cry of alarm.

The tide *had* risen, and was already beating at a formidable depth against both sides of the rocks which shut in the cave. Consternation of course reigned among the party. A night spent in the further recesses of that damp hole, even supposing the tide did not reach the end (which was very doubtful), afforded anything but a cheerful prospect. Could anybody get up through the shaft to the upper cliff? Certainly, if they had a long ladder. But there were no ladders lying about the cave; and, finally, everybody stood mournfully watching the rising waters at the mouth of their prison. Mrs. Evans all this time appeared singularly calm, and administered a little encouragement to some of the almost fainting ladies. When the panic was at its climax, Mrs. Evans' own large boat was seen quietly rounding the projecting rocks and was soon comfortably pushed up to the feet of the imprisoned party, who had nothing to do but to embark in two or three detachments and be safely landed in the bay outside, beyond the reach of the sea. The whole incident, it is to be suspected, had been pre-arranged by the hostess to infuse a little wholesome excitement among her country guests.

Our small village church at Donabate was not often honoured by this lady's presence, but one Sunday she saw fit to attend service with some visitors; and a big dog unluckily followed her into the pew and lay extended on the floor, which he proceeded to beat with his tail after the manner of impatient dogs under durance. This disturbance was too much for the poor parson, who did not love Mrs. Evans. As he proceeded with the service and the rappings were repeated again and again, his patience gave way, and he read out this extraordinary lesson to his astonished congregation:—"The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself. Turn out that dog, if you please! It's extremely wrong to bring a dog into church." During the winter Mrs.

Evans was wont to live much alone in her country house, surrounded only by her old servants and multitudes of old books. When at last, in old age, she found herself attacked by mortal disease she went to Paris to profit by the skill of some French physician in whom she had confidence, and there, with unshaken courage she passed away. Her remains, enclosed in a leaden coffin, were brought back to Portrane, and her Irish terrier who adored her, somehow recognised the dreadful chest and exhibited a frenzy of grief; leaping upon it and tearing at the pall with piteous cries. Next morning, strange to say, the poor brute was, with six others about the place, in such a state of excitement as to be supposed to be rabid and it was thought necessary to shoot them all. One of them leaped the gate of the yard and escaping bit two of my father's cows, which became rabid, and were shot in my presence. Mrs. Evans was buried beside her beloved husband in the little roofless and ruined church of Portrane, close by the shore. On another grave in the same church belonging to the same family, a dog had some years previously died of grief.

A brother of this lady, who walked over often to Newbridge from Portrane to bring my mother some scented broom which she loved, was a very singular and pathetic character. He was a younger brother of that sufficiently astute man of the world, Sir Henry Parnell, afterwards Lord Congleton, but was his antipodes in disposition. Thomas Parnell, "Old Tom Parnell," as all Dublin knew him for forty years, had a huge ungainly figure like Dr. Johnson's, and one of the sweetest, softest faces ever worn by mortal man. He had, at some remote and long forgotten period, been seized with a fervent and self-denying religious enthusiasm of the ultra-Protestant type; and this had somehow given birth in his brain to a scheme for arranging texts of the Bible in a mysterious order

which, when completed, should afford infallible answers to every question of the human mind! To construct the interminable tables required for this wonderful plan, poor Tom Parnell devoted his life and fortune. For years which must have amounted to many decades, he laboured at the work in a bare, gloomy, dusty room in what was called a "Protestant Office" in Sackville Street. Money went speedily to clerks and printers; and no doubt the good man (who himself lived, as he used to say laughingly, on "a second-hand bone,") gave money also freely in alms. One way or another Mr. Parnell grew poorer and more poor, his coat looked shabbier, and his beautiful long white hair more obviously in need of a barber. Once or twice every summer he was prevailed on by his sister to tear himself from his work and pay her a few weeks' visit in the country at Portrane; and to her and all her visitors he preached incessantly his monotonous appeal: "Repent; and cease to eat good dinners, and devote yourselves to compiling texts!" When his sister—who had treated him as a mother would treat a silly boy—died, she left him a small annuity, to be paid to him weekly in dribblets by trustees, lest he should spend it at once and starve if he received it half-yearly. After this epoch he worked on with fewer interruptions than ever at his dreary text-books in that empty, grimy office. Summer's sun and winter's snow were alike to the lonely old man. He ploughed on at his hopeless task. There was no probability that he should live to fill up the interminable columns, and no apparent reason to suppose that any human being would use the books if he ever did so and supposing them to be printed. But still he laboured on. Old friends —myself among them—who had known him in their childhood, looked in now and then to shake hands with him, and, noticing how pale and worn and aged he seemed, tried to induce him to come to their homes. But he only exhorted

them (like Tolstoi, whom he rather resembled), as usual, to repent and give up good dinners and help him with his texts, and denounced wildly all rich people who lived in handsome parks with mud villages at their gates, as he said, "like a velvet dress with a draggled skirt." Then, when his visitor had departed, Mr. Parnell returned patiently to his interminable texts. At last one day, late in the autumn twilight, the porter, whose duty it was to shut up the office, entered the room and found the old man sitting quietly in the chair where he had laboured so long—fallen into the last long sleep.

I never saw much of Irish society out of our own county. Once, when I was eighteen, my father and I went a tour of visits to his relations in Connaught, travelling, as was necessary in those days, very slowly with post-horses to our carriage, my maid on the box, and obliged to stop at inns on the way. Some of these inns were wretched places. I remember in one finding a packet of letters addressed to some attorney, under my bolster! At another, this dialogue took place between me and the waiter:—

"What can we have for dinner?"

"Anything you please, Ma'am. *Anything* you please."

"Well, but exactly what can we have?"

(Waiter, triumphantly): "You can have a pair of ducks."

"I am sorry to say Mr. Cobbe cannot eat ducks. What else?"

"They are very fine ducks, Ma'am."

"I dare say. But what else?"

"You might have the ducks boiled, Ma'am!"

"No, no. Can we have mutton?"

"Well; not mutton, to-day, Ma'am."

"Some beef?"

"No, Ma'am."

"Some veal?"

"Not any veal, I'm afraid."

"Well, then, a fowl?"

"We haven't got a fowl."

"What on earth have you got, then?"

"Well, then, Ma'am, I'm afeared if you won't have the fine pair of ducks, there's nothing for it but bacon and eggs!"

We went first to Drumcar and next (a two days' drive) to Moydrum Castle which then belonged to my father's cousin, old Lady Castlemaine. Another old cousin in the house showed me where, between two towers covered with ivy, she had looked one dark night out of her bedroom window on hearing a wailing noise below, and had seen some white object larger than any bird, floating slowly up and then sinking down into the shadow below again, and yet again. Of course it was the Banshee; and somebody had died afterwards! We also had our Banshee at Newbridge about that time. One stormy and rainy Sunday night in October my father was reading a sermon as usual to the assembled household, and the family, gathered near the fire in what we were wont to call on these evenings "Sinner's chair" and the "Seat of the Scornful," were rather somnolent, when the most piercing and unearthly shrieks arose apparently just outside the windows in the pleasure ground, and startled us all wide-awake. At the head of the row of servants sat our dear old housekeeper "Joney" then the head-gardener's wife, who had adopted a child of three years old, and this evening had left him fast asleep in the housekeeper's room, which was under part of the drawing-room. Naturally she and all of us supposed that "Johnny" had wakened and was screaming on finding himself alone; and though the outcries were not like those of a child, "Joney" rose and hastily passed down the room and went to look after her charge. To reach the house-

keeper's room she necessarily passed the servants' hall and out of it rushed the coachman—a big, usually red-faced Englishman, whom she declared was on that occasion as pale as death. The next instant one of the housemaids, who had likewise played truant from prayers, came tottering down from a bedroom (so remote that I have always wondered how *any* noise below the drawing-room could have reached it), and sunk fainting on a chair. The little boy meanwhile was sleeping like a cherub in undisturbed repose in a clothes basket! What that wild noise was,—heard by at least two dozen people,—we never learned and somehow did not care much to investigate.

After our visit at Moydrum my father and I went to yet other cousins at Garbally; his mother's old home. At that time—I speak of more than half a century ago,—the Clancarty family was much respected in Ireland; and the household at Garbally was conducted on high religious principles and in a very dignified manner. It was in the Forties that the annual Sheep Fair of Ballinasloe was at its best, and something like 200,000 sheep were then commonly herded at night in Garbally Park. The scene of the Fair was described as curious, but (like a stupid young prig, as I must have been) I declined the place offered me in one of the carriages and stopped in the house on the plea of a cold, but really to enjoy a private hunt in the magnificent library of which I had caught a glimpse. When the various parties came back late in the day there was much talk of a droll mishap. The Marquis of Downshire of that time, who was stopping in the house, was a man of colossal strength and rumour said he had killed two men by accidental blows intended as friendly. However this may be, he was on this occasion overthrown *by sheep!* He was standing in the gangway between the hurdles in the great fair, when an immense flock of terrified animals rushed through, overset

him and trampled him under their feet. When he came home, laughing good-humouredly at his disaster, he presented a marvellous spectacle with his rather *voyant* light costume of the morning in a frightful pickle. Another agreeable man in the house was the Lord Devon of that day, a very able and cultivated man (whom I straightway interrogated concerning Gibbon's chapter on the Courtenays!); and poor Lord Leitrim, a kindly and good Irish landlord, afterwards most cruelly murdered. There were also the Ernes and Lord Enniskillen and many others whom I have forgotten, and a dear aged lady; the Marchioness of Ormonde. Hearing I had a cold, she kindly proposed to treat me medically and said: "I should advise you to try Brandy and Salt. For my own part I take Morrison's pills whenever I am ill, if I cannot get hydropathic baths; but I have a very great opinion of Tar-water. Holloway's ointment and pills, too, are excellent. My son, you know, joined with Mr. ——" (I have forgotten the name) "to pay £15,000 to St. John Long for his famous recipe; but it turned out no good when we had it. No! I advise you decidedly to try brandy and salt."

From Garbally we drove to Parsonstown, where Lady Rosse was good enough to welcome us to indulge my intense longing to see the great telescope, then quite recently erected. Lord Rosse at that time believed that, as he had resolved into separate stars many of the nebulæ which were irresolvable by Herschel's telescope, there was a presumption that *all* were resolvable; and consequently that the nebular hypothesis must be abandoned. The later discovery of gaseous nebulæ by the spectroscope re-established the theory. I was very anxious on the subject, having pinned my faith already on the *Vestiges of Creation* (then a new book), in sequence to Nichol's *Architecture of the Heavens;* that prose-poem of science. Lord Rosse was infinitely indulgent to my girlish curiosity, and took me to see the

process of polishing the speculum of his second telescope; a most ingenious piece of mechanism invented mainly by himself. He also showed me models which he had made in plaster of lunar craters. I saw the great telescope by day, but, alas, when darkness came and it was to have been ready for me to look through it and I was trembling with anticipation, the butler came to the drawing-room door and announced: "A rainy night, my lord"! It was a life-long disappointment for we could not stay another day though hospitably pressed to do so; and I never had another chance.

Lord Rosse had guessed already that Robert Chambers was the author of the *Vestiges*. He explained to me the reason for the enormous mass of masonry on which the seven-foot telescope rested, by the curious fact that even where it stood within his park, the roll of a cart more than two miles away, outside, was enough to make the ground tremble and to disturb the observation.

There was a romantic story then current in Ireland about Lord and Lady Rosse. It was said that, as a young man, he had gone *incog.* and worked as a handicraftsman in some large foundry in the north of England to learn the secrets of machine making. After a time, his employer, considering him a peculiarly promising young artisan, invited him occasionally to a Sunday family dinner when young Lord Parsons, as he then was, speedily fell in love with his host's daughter. Observing what was going on, the father put a veto on what he thought would be a *mésalliance* for Miss Green, and the supposed artisan left his employment and the country; but not without receiving from the young lady an assurance that she returned his attachment. Shortly afterwards, having gone home and obtained his father, Lord Rosse's consent, he re-appeared and now made his proposals to Mr. Green, *père*, in all due form as the heir of a good estate and an earldom. He was not rejected this time.

I tell this story only as a pretty one current when I saw Lord and Lady Rosse; a very happy and united couple with little children who have since grown to be distinguished men. Very possibly it may be only a myth!

I never saw Archbishop Whately except when he confirmed me in the church of Malahide. He was no doubt a sincerely pious man, but, his rough and irreverent manner (intended, I believe, as à protest against the Pecksniffian tone then common among evangelical dignitaries) was almost repulsive and certainly startling. Outside his palace in Stephen's Green there was at that time a row of short columns connected from top to top by heavy chains which fell in festoons and guarded the gardens of the square. Nothing would serve his Grace (we were told with horror by the spectators) than to go of a morning after breakfast and sit on these chains smoking his cigar as he swung gently back and forth, kicking the ground to gain impetus.

On the occasion of my confirmation he exhibited one of his whims most unpleasantly for me. This was, that he must actually touch, in his episcopal benediction, the *head*, not merely the *hair*, of the kneeling catechumen. Unhappily, my maid had not foreseen this contingency, but had thought she could not have a finer opportunity for displaying her skill in plaiting my redundant locks; and had built up such an edifice with plaits and pins, (on the part of my head which necessarily came under the Archbishop's hand) that he had much ado to overthrow the same! He did so, however, effectually; and I finally walked back, through the church to my pew with all my *chevelure* hanging down in disorder, far from "admired" by me or anybody.

Of all the phases of orthodoxy I think that of Whately,—well called the *Hard Church*,—was the last which I could have adopted at any period of my life. It was obviously his view that a chain of propositions might be constructed by

iron logic, beginning with the record of a miracle two thousand years ago and ending with unavoidable conversion to the love of God and Man!

The last person of whom I shall speak as known to me first in Ireland, was that dear and noble woman, Fanny Kemble. She has not mentioned in her delightful *Records* how our acquaintance, destined to ripen into a life-long friendship, began at Newbridge, but it was in a droll and characteristic way.

Mrs. Kemble's friend "H. S."—Harriet St. Leger—lived at Ardgillan Castle, eight Irish miles from Newbridge. Her sister, the wife of Hon. and Rev. Edward Taylor and mother of the late Tory Whip, was my mother's best-liked neighbour, and at an early age I was taught to look with respect on the somewhat singular figure of Miss St. Leger. In those days any departure from the conventional dress of the time was talked of as if it were altogether the most important fact connected with a woman, no matter what might be the greatness of her character or abilities. Like her contemporaries and fellow countrywomen, the Ladies of Llangollen, (also Irish), Harriet St. Leger early adopted a costume consisting of a riding habit (in her case with a skirt of sensible length) and a black beaver hat. All the empty-headed men and women in the county prated incessantly about these inoffensive garments, insomuch that I arrived early at the conviction that, rational and convenient as such dress would be, the game was not worth the candle. Things are altered so far now that, could dear Harriet reappear, I believe the universal comment on her dress would rather be: "How sensible and befitting"! rather than the silly, "How odd"! Anyway I imagine she must have afforded a somewhat singular contrast to her ever magnificent, not to say gorgeous friend Fanny Kemble, when at the great Exhibition of 1851, they were the observed of observers, sitting for a long time side by side close to the crystal fountain.

Every reader of the charming *Records of a Girlhood* and *Recollections of Later Life*, must have felt some curiosity about the personality of the friend to whom those letters of our English Sevigné were addressed. I have before me as I write an excellent reproduction in platinotype from a daguerreotype of herself which dear Harriet gave me some twenty years ago. The pale, kind, sad face is, I think inexpressibly touching; and the woman who wore it deserved all the affection which Fanny Kemble gave her. She was a deep and singularly critical thinker and reader, and had one of the warmest hearts which ever beat under a cold and shy exterior. The iridescent genius of Fanny Kemble in the prime of her splendid womanhood and my poor young soul, over-burdened with thoughts too great and difficult for me, were equally drawn to seek her sympathy.

It happened once, somewhere in the early Fifties, that Mrs. Kemble was paying a visit to Miss St. Leger at Ardgillan, and we arranged that she should bring her over some day to Newbridge to luncheon. I was, of course, prepared to receive my guest very cordially but, to my astonishment, when Mrs. Kemble entered she made me the most formal salutation conceivable and, after being seated, answered all my small politenesses in monosyllables and with obvious annoyance and disinclination to converse with me or with any of my friends whom I presented to her. Something was evidently frightfully amiss, and Harriet perceived it; but what could it be? What could be done? Happily the gong sounded for luncheon, and, my father being absent, my eldest brother offered his arm to Mrs. Kemble and led her, walking with more than her usual stateliness across the two halls to the dining-room, where he placed her, of course, beside himself. I was at the other end of the table but I heard afterwards all that occurred. We were a party of

eighteen, and naturally the long table had a good many dishes on it in the old fashion. My brother looked over it and asked: "What will you take, Mrs. Kemble? Roast fowl? or galantine? or a little Mayonnaise, or what else?" "Thank you," replied Mrs. Kemble, "*If there be a potatoe!*"

Of course there was a potatoe—nay, several; but a terrible *gêne* hung over us all till Miss Taylor hurriedly called for her carriage, and the party drove off.

The moment they left the door after our formal farewells, Harriet St. Leger (as she afterwards told me) fell on her friend: "Well, Fanny, never, *never* will I bring you anywhere again. How *could* you behave so to Fanny Cobbe?"

"I cannot permit any one," said Mrs. Kemble, "to invite a number of people to meet me without having asked my consent; I do not choose to be made a gazing-stock to the county. Miss Cobbe had got up a regular party of all those people, and you could see the room was decorated for it."

"Good Heavens, what are you talking of?" said Harriet, "those ladies and gentlemen are all her relations, stopping in the house. She could not turn them out because you were coming, and her room is always full of flowers."

"Is that really so?" said Mrs. Kemble, "Then you shall tell Fanny Cobbe that I ask her pardon for my bad behaviour, and if she will forgive me and come to see me in London, *I will never behave badly to her again!*"

In a letter of hers to Harriet St. Leger given to me after her death, I was touched to read the following reference to this droll incident:—

"Bilton Hotel,
"Wed. 9th.

"I am interrupted by a perfect bundle of fragrance and fresh colour sent by Miss Cobbe with a note in which I am

sorry to say she gives me very little hope of seeing her at all while I am in Dublin. This, as you know, is a real disappointment to me. I had rather fallen in love with her, and wished very much to have had some opportunity of more intercourse with her. Her face when I came to talk to her seemed to me keen and sweet—a charming combination—and I was so grateful to her for not being repelled by my ungracious demeanour at her house, that I had quite looked forward to the pleasure of seeing her again.

"F. A. K."

I did go to see her in London ; and she kept her word, and was my dear and affectionate friend and bore many things from me with perfect good humour, for forty years ; including (horrible to recall!) my falling fast asleep while she was reading Shakespeare to Mary Lloyd and me in our drawing-room here at Hengwrt! Among her many kindnesses was the gift of a mass of her Correspondence from the beginning of her theatrical career in 1821 to her last years. She also successively gave me the MSS. of all her *Records*, but in each case I induced her to take them back and publish them herself. I have now, as a priceless legacy, a large parcel of her own letters, and five thick volumes of autograph letters addressed to her by half the celebrated men and women of her time. They testify uniformly to the admiration, affection and respect wherewith,—her little foibles notwithstanding,—she was regarded by three generations.

# CHAPTER VIII.

## *UPROOTED*

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I draw now to the closing years of my life at Newbridge, after I had published my first book and before my father died. They were happy and peaceful years, though gradually overshadowed by the sense that the long tenure of that beloved home must soon end. It is one of the many perversities of woman's destiny that she is, not only by hereditary instinct a home-making animal, but is encouraged to the uttermost to centre all her interests in her home; every pursuit which would give her anchorage elsewhere, (always excepting marriage) being more or less under general disapproval. Yet when the young woman takes thoroughly to this natural home-making, when she has, like a plant, sent her roots down into the cellars and her tendrils up into the garrets, and every room bears the impress of her personality, when she glories in every good picture on the walls or bit of choice china on the tables and blushes for every stain on the carpets, when, in short, her home is, as it should be, her outer garment, her nest, her shell, fitted to her like that of a murex, then, almost invariably comes to her the order to leave it all, tear herself out of it,—and go to make (if she can) some other home elsewhere. Supposing her to have married early, and that she is spared the late uprooting from her father's house at his death, she has usually to bear a similar transition when she survives her husband; and in this case often with the failing health and spirits of old age. I do not know how these heart-breaks are to be spared to women of the class of the daughters and wives of country gentlemen or clergymen; but they are

hard to bear. Perhaps the most fortunate daughters (harsh as it seems to say so) are those whose fathers die while they are themselves still in full vigour and able to begin a new existence with spirit and make new friends; as was my case. Some of my contemporaries whose fathers lived till they were fifty, or even older, had a bitterer trial in quitting their homes and were never able to start afresh.

In my last few years at Newbridge my father and I were both cheered by the frequent presence of my dear little niece, Helen, on whom he doted, and towards whom flowed out the tenderness which had scarcely been allowed its free course with his own children. *L'Art d'être Grandpère* is surely the most beautiful of arts! When all personal pleasures have pretty well died away then begins the reflected pleasure in the fresh, innocent delights of the child; a moonlight of happiness perhaps more sweet and tender than the garish joys of the noontide of life. To me, who had never lived in a house with little children, it brought a whole world of revelations to have this babe and afterwards her little sister, in a nursery under my supervision during their mother's long illnesses. I understood for the first time all that a child may be in a woman's life, and how their little hands may pull our heartstrings. My nieces were dear, good, little babes then; they are dear and good women now; the comfort of my age, as they were the darlings of my middle life.

Having received sufficient encouragement from the *succès d'estime* of my *Theory of Intuitive Morals*, I proceeded now to write the first of the three books on *Practical Morals* with which I designed to complete the work. My volume of *Religious Duty*, then written, has proved, however, the only one of the series ever published. At a later time I wrote some chapters on *Personal* and on *Social Duty*, but was dissatisfied with them, and destroyed the MSS.

As *Religious Duty* (3rd edition) is still to be had (included by Mr. Fisher Unwin in his late re-issue of my principal works), I need not trouble the reader by any such analysis of it as I have given of the former volume. In writing concerning *Religious Duty* at the time, I find in a letter of mine to Harriet St. Leger (returned to me when she grew blind), that I spoke of it thus:—

"Newbridge, April 25th, 1857.

"You see I have, after all, inserted a little preface. I thought it necessary to explain the object of the book, lest it might seem superfluous where it coincides with orthodox teaching, and offensively daring where it diverges from it. Your cousin's doubt about my Christianity lasting till she reached the end of *Intuitive Morals*, made me resolve to forestall in this case any such danger of seeming to fight without showing my colours. You see I have now nailed them mast-high. But though I have done this, I cannot say that it has been in any way to *make converts* to my own creed that I have written this book. I wanted to show those who are already Theists, actually or approximately, that Theism is something far more than they seem commonly to understand. I wanted, too, to show to those who have had their historical faith shaken, but who still cling to it from the belief that without it no real *religion* is possible, that they may find all which their hearts can need in a faith purely intuitive. Perhaps I ought rather to say that these objects have been before me in working at my book. I suppose in reality the impulse to such an undertaking comes more simply. We think we have found some truths, and we long to develop and communicate them. We do not sit down and say 'Such and such sort of people want such and such a book. I will try and write it.'"

The plan of this book is simple. After discussing in the first chapter the *Canon of Religious Duty*, which I define to be "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart and soul and strength,"—I discuss, in the next chapter,

*Religious Offences* against that Law,—Blasphemy, Hypocrisy, Perjury, &c. The third chapter deals with *Religious Faults* (failures of duty) such as Thanklessness, Irreverence, Worldliness, &c. The fourth, which constitutes the main bulk of the book, consists of what are practically six Sermons on Thanksgiving, Adoration, Prayer, Repentance, Faith, and Self-Consecration.

The book has been very much liked by some readers, especially the chapter on *Thanksgiving*, which I reprinted later in a tiny volume. It is strange in these days of pessimism to read it again. I am glad I wrote it when my heart was unchilled, my sight undimmed, by the frozen fog which has been hanging over us for the last two decades. An incident connected with this chapter touched me deeply. My father in his last illness permitted it to be read to him. Having never before listened to anything I had written, and having, even then, no idea who wrote the book, he expressed pleasure and sympathy with it, especially with a passage in which I speak of the hope of being, in the future life, "young again in all that makes childhood beautiful and holy." It was a pledge to me of how near our hearts truly were, under apparently world-wide differences.

My father was now sinking slowly beneath the weight of years and of frequent returns of the malarial fever of India,—in those days called "Ague,"—which he had caught half a century before in the Mahratta wars. I have said something already of his powerful character, his upright, honourable, fearless nature; his strong sense of Duty. Of the lower sort of faults and vices he was absolutely incapable. No one who knew him could imagine him as saying a false or prevaricating word; of driving a hard bargain; of eating or drinking beyond the strictest rules of temperance; least of all, of faithlessness in thought or deed to his wife or her memory. His mistakes and errors, such

as they were, arose solely from a fiery temper and a despotic will, nourished rather than checked by his ideas concerning the rights of parents, and husbands, masters and employers; and from his narrow religious creed. Such as he was, every one honoured, some feared, and many loved him.

Before I pass on to detail more of the incidents of my own life, I shall here narrate all that I can recall of his descriptions of the most important occurrence in his career—the battle of Assaye.

In Mr. George Hooper's delightful Life of Wellington (*English Men of Action Series*) there is a spirited account of that battle, whereby British supremacy in India was practically secured. Mr. Hooper speaks enthusiastically of the behaviour, in that memorable fight, of the 19th Light Dragoons, and of its "splendid charge," which, with the "irresistible sweep" of the 78th, proved the "decisive stroke" of the great day. He describes this charge thus:—

> . . . . "The piquets, or leading troops on the right were by mistake led off towards Assaye, uncovering the second line, and falling themselves into a deadly converging fire. The Seventy-Fourth followed the piquets into the cannonade, and a great gap was thus made in the array. The enemy's horse rode up to charge, and so serious was the peril on the right that the Nineteenth Light Dragoons and a native cavalry regiment were obliged to charge at once. Eager for the fray, they galloped up, cheering as they went, and cheered by the wounded; and, riding home, even to the batteries, saved the remnants of the piquets and of the Seventy-Fourth." (P. 76.)

My father, then a cornet in the regiment, carried the regimental flag of the Nineteenth through that charge, and for the rest of the day; the non-commissioned officer whose duty it was to bear it having been struck dead at the first onset, and my father saving the flag from falling into the hands of the Mahrattas.

The Nineteenth Light Dragoons of that epoch wore a grey uniform, and heavy steel helmets with large red plumes, which caused the Mahrattas to nickname them "The Red Headed Rascals." On their shoulders were simple epaulettes made of chains of some common white metal, one of which I retrieved from a heap of rubbish fifty years after Assaye, and still wear as a bracelet. The men could scarcely have deserved the name of *Light* if many of them weighed, as did my father at 18, no less than 18 stone, inclusive of his saddle and accoutrements! The fashion of long hair, tied in "pig tails," still prevailed; and my father often laughingly boasted that the mass of his fair hair, duly tied with black ribbon, had descended far enough to reach his saddle and to form an efficient protection from sabre cuts on his back and shoulders. Mr. Hooper estimates the total number of the British army at Assaye at 5,000; my father used to speak of it as about 4,500; while the *cavalry* alone, of the enemy were some 30,000. The infantry were seemingly innumerable, and altogether covered the plain. There was also a considerable force of artillery on Scindias' side, and, commanding them, was a French officer whose name my father repeatedly mentioned, but which I have unfortunately forgotten.* The handful of

* Mr. Hutton, whose exceedingly interesting and brilliant *Life of the Marquess of Wellesley* (in the "*Rulers of India*" series) includes an account of the whole campaign, has been so kind as to endeavour to identify this Frenchman for me, and tells me that in a note to Wellington's *Despatches*, Vol. II., p. 323, it is given as *Dupont;* Wellington speaking of him as commanding a "brigade of infantry." My father certainly spoke of him or some other Frenchman as commanding Scindias' artillery. Mr. Hutton has also been good enough to refer me to Grant Duff's *History of the Mahrattas*, Vol. III., p. 240, with regard to the number of British troops engaged at Assaye. He (Mr. Grant Duff) says the handful of British troops did not exceed 4,500, as my father also estimated them.

English troops had done a full day's march under an Indian sun before the battle began. When the Nineteenth received orders to charge they had been sitting long on their horses in a position which left them exposed to the *ricochet* of the shot of the enemy, and the strain on the discipline of the men, as one after another was picked off, had been enormous; not to prevent them from *retreating*—they had no such idea,—but to stop them from charging without orders. At last the word of command to charge came from Wellesley, and the whole regiment responded with a *roar!* Then came the fire of death and men and officers fell all around, as it seemed almost every second man. Among the rest, as I have said, the colour-sergeant was struck down, and my father, as was his duty, seized the flag from the poor fellow's hands as he fell and carried it, waving in front of the regiment up to the guns of the enemy.

In one or other of the repeated charges which the Nineteenth continued to make even after their commanding officer, Colonel Maxwell, had been killed, my father found himself in hand to hand conflict with the French General, who was in command of the Mahratta artillery. He wore an ordinary uniform and my father, having struck him with his sabre at the back of his neck, expected to see terrible results from the blow of a hand notorious all his life for its extraordinary strength. But fortunately the General had prudently included a coat of armour under his uniform; and the blow only resulted in a considerable dent in the blade of my father's sabre; a dent which (in Biblical language) "may be seen unto this day," where the weapon hangs in the study at Newbridge.

At another period of this awful battle the young Cornet dismounted beside a stream to drink, and to allow his horse to do the same. While so occupied, Colonel Wellesley came up to follow his example, and they conversed for a few

minutes while dipping their hands and faces in the brook (or river). As they did so, there slowly oozed down upon them, trickling through the water, a streamlet of blood. Of course they both turned away in horror and remounted to return to the battle.

At last the tremendous struggle was over. An army of 4,500 or 5,000 tired English troops, had routed five times as many horsemen and perhaps twenty times as many infantry of the warlike Mahrattas. The field was clear and the English flag waved over the English Marathon.

After this the poor, wearied soldiers were compelled to ride back *ten miles* to camp for the night; and when they reached their ground and dismounted, many of them—my father among the rest—fell on the earth and slept where they lay. Next morning they marched back to the field of Assaye and the scene which met their eyes was one which no lapse of years could efface from memory. The pomp and glory and joy of victory were past; the horror of it was before them in mangled corpses of men and horses, over which hung clouds of flies and vultures. Fourteen officers of his own regiment, whose last meal on earth he had shared in convivial merriment, my father saw buried together in one grave. Then the band of the regiment played "*The Rose Tree*" and the men marched away with set faces. Long years afterwards I happened to play that old air on the piano, but my father stopped me, "Do not play *that* tune, pray! I cannot bear the memories it brings to me."

After Assaye my father fought at Argaon (or Argaum), a battle which Mr. Turner describes as "even more decisive than the last"; and on December 14th he joined in the terrific storming of the great fortress of Gawiljarh, with which the war in the Deccan terminated. He received medals for Assaye and Argaum, just fifty years after those battles were fought!

After his return from India, my father remained at his mother's house in Bath till 1809, when he married my dear mother, then living with her guardians close by, at 29, Royal Crescent; and brought her to Newbridge, where they both lived, as I have described, with few and short interruptions till she died in October, 1847, and he in November, 1857. For all that half century he acted nobly the part to which he was called, of landlord, magistrate and head of a family. There was nothing in him of the ideal Irish, fox-hunting, happy-go-lucky, much indebted Squire. There never was a year in his life in which every one of his bills was not settled. His books, piled on his study table, showed the regular payment, week by week, of all his labourers for fifty years. No quarter day passed without every servant in the house receiving his, or her, wages. So far was Newbridge from a Castle Rackrent that though much in it of the furniture and decorations belonged to the previous century, everything was kept in perfect order and repair in the house and in the stables, coach-houses and beautiful old garden. Punctuality reigned under the old soldier's *régime;* clocks and bells and gongs sounded regularly for prayers and meals; and dinner was served sharply to the moment. I should indeed be at a loss to say in what respect my father betrayed his Anglo-Irish race, if it were not his high spirit.

At last, and very soon after the photograph which I am inserting in this book was taken, the long, good life drew to its end in peace. I have found a letter which I wrote to Harriet St. Leger a day or two after his death, and I will here transcribe part of it, rather than narrate the event afresh.

"Nov. 14th, 1857.

"Dearest Harriet,

"My poor father's sufferings are over. He died on Wednesday evening, without the least pain or struggle,

having sunk gradually into an unconscious state since Sunday morning. At all events it proved a most merciful close to his long sufferings, for he never seemed even aware of the terrible state into which the poor limbs fell, but became weaker and weaker, and as the mortification advanced, died away as if in the gentlest sleep he had known for many a day. It is all very merciful, I can feel nothing else, though it is very sad to have had no parting words of blessing, such as I am sure he would have given me. All those he loved best were near him. He had Dotie till the last day of his consciousness, and the little thing continually asked afterwards to go to his study, and enquired, 'Grandpa 'seep?' When he had ceased to speak at all comprehensibly, the morning before he died he pointed to her picture, and half smiled when I brought it to him. Poor old father! He is free now from all his miseries—gone home to God after his long, long life of good and honour! Fifty years he has lived as master here. Who but God knows all the kind and generous actions he has done in that half century! To the very last he completed everything, paying his labourers and settling his books on Saturday; and we find all his arrangements made in the most perfect and thoughtful way for everybody. There was a letter left for me. It only contained a £100 note and the words, 'The last token of the love and affection of a father to his daughter.' . . . . 'He is now looking so noble and happy, I might say, so handsome; his features seem so glorified by death, that it does one good to go and sit beside him. I never saw Death look so little terrible. Would that the poor form could lie there, ever! The grief will be far worse after to-day, when we shall see it for the last time. Jessie has made an outline of the face as it is now, very like. How wonderful and blessed is this glorifying power of death; taking away the lines of age and weak distension of muscles, and leaving only, as it would seem, the true face of the man as he was beneath all surface weaknesses; the 'garment by the soul laid by' smoothed out and folded! My cousins and Jessie and I all feel very much how blessedly

this face speaks to us; how it is *not him*, but a token of what he is now. I grieve that I was not more to him, that I did not better win his love and do more to deserve it; but even this sorrow has its comfort. Perhaps he knows now that with all my heart I did feel the deepest tenderness for his sufferings and respect for his great virtues. At all events the wall of *creed* has fallen down from between our souls for ever, and I believe that was the one great obstacle which I could never overthrow entirely. Forbearing as he proved himself, it was never forgotten. Now *all* that divided us is over. . . . . It seems all very dream-like just now, long as we have thought of it, and I know the waking will be a terrible pang when *all* is over and I have left *everything* round which my heart roots have twined in five and thirty years. But I don't fear—how can I, when my utmost hopes could not have pointed to an end so happy as God has given to my poor old father? Everything is merciful about it—even to the time when we were all together here, and when I am neither young enough to need protection, or old enough to feel diminished energies. . . . ."

I carried out my long formed resolution, of course, and started on my pilgrimage just three weeks after my father's death. Leaving Newbridge was the worst wrench of my life. The home of my childhood and youth, of which I had been mistress for nineteen years, for every corner of which I had cared, and wherein there was not a room without its tender associations,—it seemed almost impossible to drag myself away. To strip my pretty bedroom of its pictures and books and ornaments, many of them my mother's gifts, and my mother's work; to send off my harp to be sold; and make over to my brother my private possessions of ponies and carriage,—(luckily my dear dog was dead),—and take leave of all the dear old servants and village people, formed a whole series of pangs. I remember feeling a

distinct regret and smiling at myself for doing so, when I locked for the last time the big, old-fashioned tea-chest out of which I had made the family breakfast for twenty years. Then came the last morning and as I drove out of the gates of Newbridge I felt I was leaving behind me all and everything in the world which I had loved and cherished.

I was going also, it must be said, not only from a family circle to entire solitude, but also from comparative wealth to poverty. Considering the interests of my eldest brother as paramount, and the seriousness of his charge of keeping up the house and estate, my father left me but a very small patrimony; amounting, at the rate of interest then obtainable, to a trifle over £200 a year. For a woman who had always had every possible service rendered to her by a regiment of well-trained servants, and had had £130 a year pocket-money since she left school, it must be confessed that this was a narrow provision. My father intended me to continue to live at Newbridge with my brother and sister-in-law; but such a plan was entirely contrary to my view of what my life should thenceforth become, and I accepted my poverty cheerfully enough, with the help of a little ready money wherewith to start on my travels. I cut off half my hair, being totally unable to grapple with the whole without a maid, and faced the future with the advantage of the great calm which follows any immediate concern with Death. While that Shadow hangs over our heads we perceive but dimly the thorns and pebbles on our road.

A week after leaving Ireland I spent one night with Harriet St. Leger in lodgings which she and her friend, Miss Dorothy Wilson, occupied on the Marina at St. Leonard's.

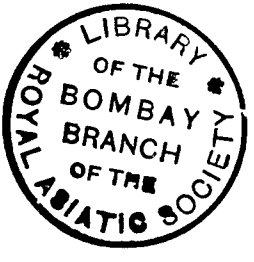
When I had gone to my room rather late that evening, I opened my window and looked out for the last time before my exile, on an English scene. There was the line of friendly lamps close by, but beyond it the sea, dark as pitch on that

December night, was only revealed by the sound of the slow waves breaking sullenly on the beach beneath. It was like a black wall before me; the sea and sky undistinguishable. I thought: "To-morrow I shall go out into that darkness! How like to death is this!"

# CHAPTER

# IX.

## *LONG JOURNEY.*



## CHAPTER IX.

### Long Journey.

The journey which I undertook when my home duties ended at the death of my father, would be considered a very moderate excursion in these latter days, but in 1857 it was still accounted somewhat of an enterprise for a "lone woman." When I told my friends that I was going to Egypt and Jerusalem, they said: "Ah, you will get as far as Rome and Naples, and that will be very interesting; but you will find too many difficulties in the way of going any further." "When I say" (I replied) "that I am going to Egypt and Jerusalem, I mean that to Egypt and Jerusalem I shall go." And so, as it proved, a wilful woman had her way; and I came back after a year with the ever-delightful privilege of observing: "I told you so."

I shall not dream of dragging the reader again over the well-worn ground at the slow pace of a writer of "*Impressions de Voyage.*" The best of my reminiscences were given to the world, in *Fraser's* Magazine, and reprinted in my *Cities of the Past*, before there was yet a prospect of a railway to Jerusalem except in Martin's picture of the "End of the World"; or of a "*Service d'omnibus*" over the wild solitudes of Lebanon, where I struggled mid' snows and torrents which nearly whelmed me and my horse in destruction. I rejoice to think that I saw those holy and wonderful lands of Palestine and Egypt while Cook's tourists were yet unborn, and Cairo had only one small English hotel and one solitary wheel carriage; and the solemn gaze of the Sphinx encountered no Golf-games on the desert sands.

My proceedings were very much like those of certain birds of the farmyard (associated particularly with Michaelmas), who very rarely are seen to rise on the wing but when they are once incited to do so, are wont to take a very wide circle in their flight before they come back to the barn door!

Paris, Marseilles, Rome, Naples, Messina, Malta, Alexandria, Cairo, Jaffa, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Hebron, Dead Sea, Jordan, Beyrout, Lebanon, Baalbec, Cyprus, Rhodes, Smyrna, Athens, Constantinople, Cape Matapan, Corfu, Trieste, Adelsberg, Venice, Florence, Milan, Lucerne, Geneva, Wiesbaden, Antwerp, London,—such was my "swoop," accomplished in 11 months and at a cost of only £400. To say that I brought home a crop of new ideas would be a small way of indicating the whole harvest of them wherewith I returned laden. There were (I think I may summarise), as the results of such a journey, the following great additions to my mental stock.

First. A totally fresh conception of the glory and beauty of Nature. When crossing the Channel I fell into talk with a charming old lady and told her how I was looking forward to seeing the great pictures and buildings of Italy. "Ah," she said, "but there is Italian *Nature* to be seen also. Do not miss it, looking only at works of art. *I* go to Italy to see it much more than the galleries and churches." I was very much astonished at this remark, but I came home after some months spent in a villa on Bellosguardo entirely converted to her view. Travellers there are who weary their feet and strain their eyes till they can no longer see or receive impressions from the miles of painted canvas, the regiments of statues, and the streets of palaces and churches wherewith Italy abounds; yet have never spent a day riding over the desolate Campagna with the far off Apennines closing the horizon, or enjoyed nights of paradise, sitting amid the cypresses and the garlanded vines, with the stars overhead, the

nightingales singing, and the fireflies darting around among the *Rose de Maggio*. Such travellers may come back to England proud of having verified every line of *Murray* on the spot, yet they have failed to "see Italy" altogether. Never shall I forget the revelation of loveliness of the Ægean and Ionian seas, of the lower slopes of Lebanon, and of the Acropolis of Athens, seen, as I saw it first, at sunrise. But when my heaviest journeys were done and I paused and rested in Villa Niccolini, with Florence below and the Val d' Arno before me, I felt as if the beauty of the world, as I then and there saw it, were joy enough for a lifetime. The old lines (I know not whose they are) kept ringing in my ears :—

> "And they shall summer high in bliss
> Upon the hills of God."

I shall quote here some verses which I wrote at that time, as they described the scene in which I lived and revelled.

### THE FESTA OF THE WORLD.

A Princess came to a southern strand,
Over a summer sea ;
And the sky smiled down on the laughing land,
For that land was Italy.

The fruit trees bent their laden boughs
O'er the fields with harvest gold,
And the rich vines wreathed from tree to tree,
Like garlands in temples old.

And over all fell the glad sunlight,
So warm, so bright, so clear !
The earth shone out like an emerald set
In the diamond atmosphere.

Then down to greet that lady sweet
Came the Duke from his palace hall :
"I thank thee, gentle Sire," she cried,
"For thy princely festival."

"For honoured guests have towns 'ere now
Been decked right royally;
But thy whole land is garlanded,
One bower of bloom for me!"

Then smiled the Duke at the lady's thought,
And the thanks he had lightly won;
For Nature's eternal Festa-day
She deemed for her alone!

A Poet stood by the Princess's side;
"O lady raise thine eye!
The Giver of this great Festival,
He dwelleth in yon blue sky.

"Thy kinsman Prince hath welcomed thee,
But God hath His world arrayed
Not more for thee than yon beggar old
Who sleeps 'neath the ilex shade.

"His sun doth shine on the peasant's fields,
His rain on his vineyard pour,
His flowers bloom by the worn wayside,
And creep o'er the cottage door.

"For each, for all is a welcome given
And spread the world's great feast;
And the King of Kings is the loving Host
And each child of man a guest."*

The beauty of Switzerland has at no time touched me as that of Italy has always done. There is something in the sharp, hard atmosphere of Switzerland (and I may add in the sharp, hard characters of the Swiss) which disenchants me in the grandest scenes.

The second thing one learns in a journey like mine is, of course, the wondrous achievements of human Art,—Temples

* The mistake recorded in these little verses was made by a daughter of Louis Philippe when visiting her uncle, the Grand Duke of Lucca. The incident was narrated to me by the sculpturess, Mdlle. Felicie Fauveau, attendant on the Duchesse de Berri.

and Churches, fountains and obelisks, pyramids and statues and pictures without end. But on this head I need say nothing. Enough has been said and to spare by those far more competent than I to write of it.

Lastly, there is a thing which I, at all events, learned by knocking about the world. It is the enormous amount of pure *human good-nature* which is to be found almost everywhere. I should weary the reader to tell all the little kindnesses done to me by fellow-passengers in the railways and steamers, and by the Captains of the vessels in which I sailed; and of the trouble which strangers took to help me out of my small difficulties. Of course men do not meet,—because they do not want,—such services; and women, who travel with men, or even two or three together, seldom invite them. But for viewing human nature *en beau*, commend me to a long journey by a woman of middle age, of no beauty, and travelling as cheaply as possible, alone.

I believe the Psychical Society has started a theory that when places where crimes have been committed are ever after "haunted," the apparitions are not exactly good, old-fashioned *real* ghosts, if I may use such an expression, but some sort of atmospheric photographs (the term is my own) left by the parties concerned, or sent telepathically from their present *habitat* (wherever that may be) to the scene of their earthly suffering or wickedness. The hypothesis, of course, relieves us from the very unpleasant surmise that the actual soul of the victims of assassination and robbery may have nothing better to do in a future life than to stand guard perpetually at the dark and dank corners, cellars, and bottoms of stone staircases, where they were cruelly done to death fifty or a hundred years before; or to loaf like detectives about the spots where their jewelry and cash-boxes (*so* useful and important to a disembodied spirit!) lie concealed. But the atmospheric photograph or magic-lantern theory, what-

ever truth it may hold, exactly answers to a sense which I should think all my readers must have experienced, as I have done, in certain houses and cities; a sense as if the crimes which had been committed therein have left an indescribable miasma, a lurid, impalpable shadow, like that of the ashes of the Polynesian volcano which darkened the sun for a year; or shall we say, like the unrecognised effluvium which probably caused Mrs. Sleeman, in her tent, to dream she was surrounded by naked murdered men, while 14 corpses were actually lying beneath her bed and were next day disinterred?* Walking once through Holyrood with Dr. John Brown (who had not visited the place for many years), I was quite overcome by this sense of ancient crime, perpetuated as it seemed, almost like a physical phenomenon in those gloomy chambers; and on describing my sensations, Dr. Brown avowed that he experienced a very similar impression. It would almost seem as if moral facts of a certain intensity, begin to throw a cloudy shadow of Evil, as Romish saints were said to exhale an odour of sanctity.

If there be a city in the world where this sense is most vivid, I think it is Rome. I have felt it also in Paris, but Rome is worst. The air (not of the Campagna with all its fevers, but of the city itself) seems foul with the blood and corruption of a thousand years. On the finest spring day, in the grand open spaces of the Piazza del Popolo, San Pietro, and the Forum, it is the same as in the darkest and narrowest streets. No person sensitive to this impression can be genuinely light-hearted and gay in Rome, as we often are even in our own gloomy London. Perhaps this is sheer fancifulness on my part, but I have been many times in Rome, twice for an entire winter, and the same impression never failed to overcome me. On my last visit I nearly died there

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* See General Sleeman's *India*.

and it was not to be described how earnestly I longed to emerge, as if out of one of Dante's *Giri*, "anywhere, anywhere out of" this Rome!

On the occasion of my first journey at Christmas, 1857, I stopped only three weeks in the Eternal City and then went on by sea to Naples. I was ill from the fatigues and anxieties of the previous weeks, and after a few, half-dazed visits to the Colosseum, the Vatican, and Shelley's grave, I found myself unable to leave my solitary fourth-floor room in the *Europa*. A card was brought to me one day while thus imprisoned, bearing names (unknown to me) of "Mr. and Mrs. Robert Apthorp," and with the singular message: "Was I the Miss Cobbe who had corresponded with Theodore Parker in America?" My first impression was one of alarm. "What! more trouble about my heresies still?" It was, however, quite a different matter. My visitors were a gentleman (a *real* American gentleman) and his wife, with two ladies who were all among Parker's intimate friends in America, and to whom he had showed my letters. They came to hold out to me the right hands of fellowship; and friends indeed we became, in such thorough sort that, after seven-and-thirty years I am corresponding with dear Mrs. Apthorp still. She and her sister nursed me through my illness; and thus my solitude in Rome came to an end.

Naples struck me on my first visit, as it has done again and again, as presenting the proof that the Beautiful is not by itself, a root out of which the Good spontaneously grows. If we want to cultivate Purity, Honesty, Veracity, Unselfishness or any other virtue, it is vain to think we shall achieve our end by giving the masses pretty pleasure-grounds and "Palaces of Delight," or even æsthetic cottages with the best reproductions of Botticelli adorning the walls. Do what we may we can never hope to surround our working men with such beauty as that of the Bay of Naples, nor to show them

Art to equal the treasures of the Museo Borbonico. And what has come of all this familiar revelling in Beauty for centuries and millenniums to the people of Naples? Only that they resemble more closely in ignorance, in squalor and in degradation the most wretched Irish who dwell in mud cabins amid the bogs, than any other people in Europe.

I had intended remaining for some time to recuperate at Naples and took a cheery little room in a certain Pension Schiassi (now abolished) on the Chiajia. In this Pension I met a number of kindly and interesting people of various nationalities; the most pleasant and cultivated of all being Finns from Helsingfors. It was a great experience to me to enter into some sort of society again, far removed from all my antecedents; no longer the mistress of a large house and dispenser of its hospitality, but a wandering tourist, known to nobody and dressed as plainly as might be. I find I wrote to my old friend, Miss St. Leger, on the subject under date January 21st, 1858, as follows: "I am really cheerful now. Those days in the country (at Cumæ and Capo di Monte) cheered me very much, and I am beginning altogether to look at the future differently. There is one thing I feel really happy about. I see now my actual position towards people, divested of the social advantages I have hitherto held; and I find it a very pleasant one. I don't think I deceive myself in imagining that people easily like me, and get interested in my ideas, while I find abundance to like and esteem in a large proportion of those I meet." (Optimism, once more! the reader will say!)

It was not, however, "all beer and skittles" for me at the Schiassi pension. I had, as I have mentioned, taken a pretty little room looking out on the Villa Reale and the Bay and Vesuvius, and had put up the photographs and miniatures I carried with me and my little knick-knacks on the writing table, and fondly flattered myself I should sit

and write there peacefully. But I reckoned without my neighbours! It was Sunday when I arrived and settled myself so complacently. On Monday morning, soon after day-break, I was rudely awakened by a dreadful four-handed strumming on a piano, apparently in my very room! On rousing myself, I perceived that a locked door close to my bed obviously opened into an adjoining chamber, and being (after the manner of Italian doors) at least two inches short of the uncarpetted floor, I was to all acoustic intents and purposes actually in the room with this atrocious jangling piano and the two thumping performers! The practising went on for two hours, and when it stopped a masculine voice arose to read the Bible aloud in family devotions. Then, after a brief interval for breakfast, burst out again the intolerable strumming. I fled, and remained out of doors for hours, but when I came back they were at it again! I appealed to the mistress of the house, in vain. Sir Andrew —— and his daughters (I will call them the Misses Shocking-strum, their real name concerns nobody now) had been there before me and would no doubt stop long after me, and could not be prevented from playing from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. every day of the week. I took a large card and wrote on it this pathetic appeal:—

> "Pity the sorrows of a poor old maid,
> Whose hapless lot has made her lodge next door,
> Who fain would wish those morning airs delayed;
> O practice less! And she will bless you more!"

I thrust this under the ill-fitting door well into the music-room, and waited anxiously for some measure of mercy to be meted to me in consequence. But no! the hateful thumping and crashing went on as before. Then I gathered up my loins and went down to the packet office and took a berth in the next steamer for Alexandria.

After landing at Messina (lovely region!) and at Malta, I embarked in a French screw-steamer, which began to roll before we were well under weigh, and which, when a real Levanter came on three days later, played pitch and toss with us passengers, insomuch that we often needed to lie on mattresses on the floor and hold something to prevent our heads from being knocked to pieces. One day, being fortunately a very good sailor, I scrambled up on deck and beheld a glorious scene. Euroclydon was playing with towering waves of lapis-lazulæ all flecked and veined like a horse's neck with white foam, and the African sun was shining down cloudless over the turmoil.

There were some French Nuns on board going to a convent in Cairo, where they were to be charitably engaged taking care of girls. The monastic mind is always an interesting study. It brings us back to the days of Bede, and times when miracles (if it be not a bull to say so) were the rule and the ordinary course of nature the exception. People are then constantly seen where they are not, and not seen where they are; and the dead are as "prominent citizens" of this world (as an American would say) as the living. Meanwhile the actual geography and history of the modern world and all that is going on in politics, society, art and literature, is as dark to the good Sister or Brother as if she or he had really (as in Hans Andersen's story) "walked back into the eleventh century." My nice French nuns were very kind and instructive to me. They told me of the Virgin's Tree which we should see at Heliopolis (though they knew nothing of the obelisk there), and they informed me that if anyone looked out on Trinity Sunday exactly at sunrise, he would see "*toutes les trois personnes de la sainte Trinité.*"

I could not help asking: "Madame les aura vues?"

"Pas précisément, Madame. Madame sait qu'à cette saison le soleil se lêve bien tôt."

"Mais, Madame, pour voir *toutes* les trois personnes ?"

It was no use. The good soul persisted in believing what she liked to believe and took care never to get up and look out on Trinity Sunday morning,—just as ten thousand Englishmen and women, who think themselves much wiser than the poor Nun, carefully avoid looking straight at facts concerning which they do not wish to be set right. St. Thomas' kind of faith which dares to look and *see*, and, if it may be to *touch*, is a much more real faith after all than that which will not venture to open its eyes.

Landing at Alexandria (after being blown off the Egyptian coast nearly as far as Crete) was an epoch in my life. No book, no gallery of pictures, can ever be more interesting or instructive than the first drive through an Eastern city; even such a hybrid one as Alexandria. But all the world knows this now, and I need not dwell on so familiar a topic. The only matter I care to record here is a visit I paid to a subterranean church which had just been opened, and of which I was fortunate enough to hear at the moment. I have never been able to learn anything further concerning it than appears in the following extract from one of my note-books, and I fear the church must long ago have been destroyed, and the frescoes, of course, effaced:

"In certain excavations now making in one of the hills of the Old City—within a few hundred yards of the Mahmoudié Canal—the workmen have come upon a small subterranean church; for whose very high antiquity many arguments may be adduced. The frescoes with which it is adorned are still in tolerable preservation, and appear to belong to the same period of art as those rescued from Pompeii. Though altogether inferior to the better specimens in the Museo Borbonico, there is yet the same simplicity of attitude and drapery; the same breadth of outline and

effect produced by few touches. It is impossible to confound them for a moment with the stiff and meretricious style of Byzantine painting.

"The form of the church is very peculiar, and I conceive antique. If we suppose a shaft to have been cut into the hill, its base may be considered to form the centre of a cross. To the west, in lieu of nave, are two staircases; one ascending, the other descending to various parts of the hillside. To the east is a small chancel, with depressed elliptical arch and recesses at the back and sides, of the same form. The north transept is a mere apse, supported by rather elegant Ionic pilasters, and having a fan-shaped roof. Opposite this, and in the place of a south transept, is the largest apartment of the whole grotto: a chamber, presenting a singular transition between a modern funeral-vault and an ancient columbarium. The walls are pierced on all sides by deep holes, of the size and shape of coffins placed endwise. There are in all thirty-two of these holes; in which, however, I could find no evidence that they had ever been applied to the purpose of interment. In the corner, between this chamber and the chancel-arch, there is a deep stone cistern sunk in the ground; I presume a font. The frescoes at the end of the chancel are small, and much effaced. In the eastern apse there is a group representing the Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes. In the front walls of the chancel-arch are two life-size figures; one representing an angel, the other having the name of Christ inscribed over it in Greek letters. This last struck me as peculiarly interesting; from the circumstance that the face bears no resemblance whatever to the one conventionally received among us, in modern times. The eyes, in the Alexandrian fresco, are dark and widely opened; the eyebrows straight and strongly marked; the hair nearly black and gathered in short, thick masses over the ears. I was the more attracted by these peculiarities, as my attention had shortly before been arrested very forcibly by the splendid bronze bust from Herculaneum, in the Museo Borbonico.

This grand and beautiful head, which Murray calls 'Speusippus' and the custodi; 'Plato in the character of the Indian Bacchus,' resembles so perfectly the common representations of Christ, that I should be at a loss to define any difference, unless it be that it has, perhaps, more intellectual power than our paintings and sculptures usually convey, and a more massive neck. If this Alexandrian fresco really represent the tradition of the 3rd or 4th century, it becomes a question of some curiosity: *whence* do we derive our modern idea of Christ's face?"

Cairo was a great delight to me. I could not afford to stop at Shepheard's Hotel but took up my abode with some kind Americans I had met in the steamer, in a sort of Pension kept by an Italian named Ronch; in Old Cairo, actually *on* the bank of the Nile; so literally so, that I might have dropped a stone from our balcony into the river, just opposite the Isle of Rhoda. From this place I made two excursions to the Pyramids and had a somewhat appalling experience in the "King's Chamber" in the vault of Cheops. I had gone rather recklessly to Ghiza without either friend or Dragoman; and allowed the wretched Scheik at the door to send five Arabs into the pyramid with me as guides. They had only two miserable dip candles altogether, and the darkness, dust, heat and noise of the Arabs chanting "Vera goot lady! Backsheesh! Backsheesh! Vera goot lady," and so on *da capo*, all in the narrow, steeply-slanting passages, together with the intolerable sense of weight as of a mountain of stone over me, proved trying to my nerves. Then, when we had reached the central vault and I had glanced at the empty sarcophagus, which is all it contains, the five men suddenly stopped their chanting, placed themselves with their backs to the wall in rows, with crossed arms in the attitude of the Osiride pilasters; and one of them in a business-like tone, demanded: "Backsheesh"! I instantly perceived

into what a trap I had fallen, and what a fool I had been to come there alone. The idea that they might march out and leave me alone in that awful place, in the darkness, very nearly made me quail. But I knew it was no time to betray alarm, so I replied that I "intended to pay them outside, but if they wished it I would do so at once." I took out my purse and gave them three shillings to be divided between the five. They took the money and then returned to their posture against the wall.

"We want Backsheesh"!

I took my courage *à deux mains*, and said, "If you give me any more trouble the English Consul shall hear of it, and you will get the stick."

"We want Backsheesh!"

"I'll have no more of this," I cried in a very sharp voice, and, turning to the ringleader, who held a candle, I said, "Here, you fellow! Take that candle on in front and let me out. Go!" *He went!*—and I blessed my stars, and all the stars, when I emerged out of that endless passage at last, and stood safe under the bright Egyptian sun.

I am glad to remember Ghiza as it was in those days before hotels, or even tents, were visible near it; when the solemn Sphinx,—so strangely and affectingly human! stood gazing over the desert sands, and beside it were only the ancient temple, the rifled tombs, and the three great Pyramids. To me in those days it seemed the most impressive Field of Death in the world.

The old Arab Mosques in Cairo also delighted me greatly both for their beauty and as studies of the original early English architecture. Needless to say I was enchanted with the streets and bazaars and all the dim, strange, lovely pictures they afforded, and the Eastern odours which pervaded them in that bright, light air, wherein my chest grew sound and strong after having been for years oppressed with

bronchial troubles. One day in my plenitude of enjoyment of health and vigour, I walked alone a long way down the splendid Shoubra avenue of Acacia Lebbex trees with the moving crowd of Arab men and women in all their varied costumes and trains of camels and asses laden with green trefoil, glittering in the alternate sun and shade with never a cart or carriage to disturb the even currents to and fro. At last I came in sight of the Nile and in the extreme excitement of the view, hastily concluded that the yellow bank which sloped down beyond the grass must be sand, and that I could actually plunge my hands in the River of Egypt. I ran down the slope some little distance from the avenue and took a few steps on the supposed yellow sand. It proved to be merely mud, like the banks of the Avon at low tide at Clifton, though of different colour, and in a moment I felt myself sinking indefinitely. Already it was nearly up to my knees, and in a few minutes I should have been (quietly and unperceived by anybody) entombed for the investigation of Egyptologers of future generations. It was a ludicrous position, and even in the peril of it I believe I laughed outright. Any way I happily remembered that I had read years before in a bad French novel, how people saved themselves in quicksands in the Landes by throwing themselves down and so dividing their weight over a much larger surface than the soles of the feet. Instantly I turned back towards the bank and cast myself along forward, and then by dint of enormous efforts withdrew my feet and struggled back to *terra firma*, much, I should think, after the mode of locomotion of an Ichthyosaurus or other "dragon of the prime." Arrived at a place of safety I had next to reflect how I was to walk home into the town in the pickle to which I had reduced myself! Luckily the hot sun of Egypt dried the mud on my homely clothes and enabled me to brush it off as dust in an incredibly quick time.

Before it had done so, however, a frog of exceptional ugliness mistook me for part of the bank and jumped on my lap. He looked such an ill-made creature that I constructed at once the (non-scientific) hypothesis that he must have been descended from some of the frogs which Pharaoh's magicians are said to have made in rivalry to Moses; forerunners of those modern pathologists who are just clever enough to *give us* all sorts of Plagues, but always stop short of *curing* them.

I was very anxious, of course, to ascend the Nile to Philæ, or at the very least to Thebes; but I was too poor by far to hire a dahabieh for myself alone, and, in those days, excursion steamers were non-existent, or very rare. I did hear of a gentleman who wanted to make up a party and take a boat, but he coolly proposed that I should pay half of the expenses of five people, and I did not view that arrangement in a favourable light. Eventually I turned sorrowfully and disappointed back to Alexandria with a pleasant party of English and American ladies and gentlemen; and after a short passage to Jaffa we rode up all together in two days to Jerusalem. I had given up riding many years before and taken to driving instead, but there was infinite exhilaration on finding myself again on horseback, on one of the active little, half Arab, Syrian steeds. That wonderful ride through the Jaffa orange groves and the Plain of Sharon with all its flowers to Lydda and Ramleh, and then, next day, to Jerusalem, was beyond all words interesting. I think no one who has been brought up as we English are, on the double literature of Palestine and England, can visit the Holy Land with other than almost breathless curiosity mingled with a thousand tender associations. What England is to a cultivated American traveller of Washington Irving's or Lowell's stamp, *that* is Palestine to us all. As for me, my religious views made it, I think, rather more than less

congenial and interesting to me than to many others. I find I wrote of it to my friend from Jerusalem (March 6th, 1858):

> "I feel very happy to be here. The land seems worthy to be that in which from earliest history the human soul has highest and oftenest soared up to God. One wants no miraculous story to make such a country a 'Holy Land;' nor can such story make it less holy to me, as it does, I think, to some who equally disbelieve it. It seems to me as if Christians must be, and in fact are, overwhelmed and confounded to find themselves in the scene of such events. To me it is all pleasure. I believe that if Christ can see us now like other departed spirits, it is those who revere him as I do, and not those who give to him his Father's place, whom he can regard most complacently. If I did not feel this it would pain me to be here."

When I went first into the church of the Holy Sepulchre it happened, on account of some function going on elsewhere, to be unusually free from the crowds of pilgrims. It seemed to me to be a real parable in stone. All the different churches, Greek, Latin, Armenian Maronite, *opened into* the central Temple; as if to show that every creed has a Door leading to the true Holy Place.

I loved also the little narrow marble shrine in the midst, with its small, low door, and the mere plain altar-tomb, with room to kneel beside it and pray,—if we will,—to him who is believed to have rested there for the mystic three days after his crucifixion; or if we will (and as I did), to "his Father and our Father"; in a spot hallowed by the associations of a hundred worshipping generations and the memory of the holiest of men.

Another day I was able to walk alone nearly all round outside the walls of Jerusalem, beginning at the Jaffa gate and passing round through what was then a desert, but is now, I am told, a populous suburb. I came successively to

Siloam and to the Valley of Hinnom, and of Jehoshaphat, to the Tombs of the Prophets, and at last to Gethsemane. At the time of my visit, this sacred spot, containing the ruins of an "oil press" (whence its supposed identification), was a small walled garden kept by monks who did their best to spoil its associations. Above it I sat for a long time beside the path up to St. Stephen's Gate, where tradition places the scene of that great first Christian Martyrdom. The ground is all strewed still, with large stones and boulders, making it easy to conjure up the terrific picture of the kneeling saint and savage crowd, and of Saul standing by watching the scene.

Leaving Jerusalem after a week with the same pleasant English and American companions, and with a due provision of guards and tents and baggage mules, I rode to Bethlehem and Hebron, visiting on the way Abraham's oak at Mamre, which is a magnificent old terebinth, and the vineyard of Esh-kol, then in a very poor condition of culture. We stopped the first night close to Solomon's Pools and I was profane enough to bring my sponges at earliest dawn into Jacob's Well at the head of the waters, and enjoy a delicious bath. Ere we turned in on the previous evening, a clergyman of our party read to us, sitting under the walls of the old Saracenic castle, the pages in Stanley's Palestine which describe, with all his vivid truthfulness and historic sentiment, the scene which lay before us; the three great ponds, "built by Solomon, repaired by Pontius Pilate," which have supplied Jerusalem with water for 3,000 years.

I am much surprised that the problem offered by the contents of the vault beneath the Mosque of Hebron has not long ago excited the intensest curiosity among both Jews and Christians. Here, within small and definite limits, must lie evidence of incalculable weight in favour of or against the

veracity of the Mosaic record. If the account in Gen. L. be correct, the bones of Jacob were brought out of Egypt and deposited here by Joseph; embalmed in the finest and most durable manner. We are expressly told (Gen. L., 2 and 3) that Joseph ordered the physicians to embalm his father, that "forty days were fulfilled for him, for so are fulfilled the days of those which are embalmed;" and that Joseph went up to Canaan with "all the servants of Pharaoh and the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt," (a rather amazing exodus!) and "chariots and horsemen, a very great company." They finally buried Jacob (v. 13) "in the Cave of the field of Macpelah which Abraham bought." It was unquestionably, then, a first-class Mummy, covered with wrappers and inscriptions, and enclosed, of course, in a splendidly-painted Mummy-coffin, which was deposited in that unique cave; and the extraordinary sanctity which has attached to the spot as far as tradition reaches back, affords presumption amounting almost to guarantee that *there*, if anywhere, below the six cenotaphs in the upper chamber, in the vault under the small hole in the floor where the Prince of Wales and Dean Stanley were privileged to look down into the darkness,—lie the relics which would terminate more controversies, and throw more light on the origin of Judaism than can be done by all the Rabbis and Bishops of Europe and Asia together! Why do not the Rothschilds and Hirschs and Montefiores and Goldsmiths put together a modest *little* subscription of a million or two and buy up Hebron, and so settle once for all whether the Jewish Ulysses were a myth or a man; and whether there were really an Israel of whom they are the "Children?" I have talked to Dean Stanley on the subject, who (as he tells us in his delightful *Jewish Church*, I., 500) shared all my curiosity, but when I urged the query: "*Did* he think that the relics of the Patriarchs would be found, if

we could examine the cave?" he put up his hands in a deprecating attitude, which all who knew and loved him will remember, and said, "Ah! that is the question, indeed!"

Is it possible that the millionaire Jews of Germany, France and England are, after all, like my poor friends the Nuns, who would not get up at sunrise on Trinity Sunday to see "*toutes les trois personnes de la sainte Trinité*,"—and that they prefer to believe that the bones of the three Patriarchs are where they ought to be, but would rather not put that confidence to the test?

One of the sights which affected me most in the course of our pilgrimage through Judæa was beheld after a night spent by the ladies of our party in our tent pitched among the sand (and centipedes!) of the desert of the Mar Saba. (Our gentlemen-friends were privileged to sleep in the vast old monastery whence they brought us next morning the most excellent *raki*.) As we rode out of the little valley of our encampment and down by the convent of Mar Saba, we obtained a complete view of the whole *hermit burrow*; for such it may properly be considered. Mar Saba is the very ideal of a desert. It lies amid the wilderness of hills, not grand enough to be sublime but only monotonous and hopelessly barren. So white are these hills that at first they appear to be of chalk, but further inspection shows them to be of whitish rock, with hardly a trace of vegetation growing anywhere over it. On the hills there is sometimes an inch of soil over the rock; in the valleys there are torrents of stones over the inch of soil. Between our mid-day halt at Derbinerbeit (the highest land in Judæa), and the evening rest at Mar Saba, our whole march had been in utter solitude; not a village, a tent, a caravan, a human being in sight. Not a tree or bush. Of living creatures hardly a bird to break the dead silence of the world,

only a large and venomous snake crawling beside our track. Thus, far from human haunts, in the heart of the wilderness, lies Mar Saba. Fit approach to such a shrine! Through the arid, burning rocks a profound and sharply-cut chasm suddenly opens and winds, forming a hideous valley, such as may exist in the unpeopled moon, but which probably has not its equal in our world for rugged and blasted desolation. There is no brook or stream in the depths of the ravine. If a torrent may ever rush down it after the thunderstorms with which the country is often visited, no traces of water remain even in early spring. Barren, burning, glaring rocks alone are to be seen on every side. Far up on the cliff, like a fortress, stands the gloomy, windowless walls of the convent; but along the ravine in an almost inaccessible gorge of the hills, are caves and holes half-way down the precipice,—the dwellings of the hermits. Here, in a den fit for a fox or a hyæna, one poor soul had died just before my visit, after five-and-forty years of self-incarceration. Death had released him, but many more remained; and we could see some of them from the distant road as we passed, sitting at the mouth of their caverns, or walking on the little ledges of rock which they had smoothed for terraces. Their food (such as it is) is sent from the convent and let down from the cliffs at needful intervals. Otherwise they live absolutely alone,—alone in this hideous desolation of nature, with the lurid, blasted desert for their sole share in God's beautiful universe. We are all, I suppose, accustomed to think of a Hermit as our poets have painted him, dwelling serene in

> "A lodge in some vast wilderness,
> Some boundless continuity of shade,"

undisturbed by all the ugly and jarring sights and sounds of our grinding civilization; sleeping calmly on his bed of fern,

feeding on his pulse and cresses, and drinking the water from the brook.

"He kneels at morn at noon and eve,
He hath a cushion plump,
It is the moss that wholly hides
The rotted old oak stump."

But the hermits of Mar Saba, how different are they from him who assoiled the Ancient Mariner? No holy cloisters of the woods, and sound of chanting brooks, and hymns of morning birds; only this silent, burning waste, this "desolation deified." It seemed as if some frightful aberration of the religious sentiment could alone lead men to choose for home, temple, prison, tomb, the one spot of earth where no flower springs to tell of God's tenderness, no soft dew or sweet sound ever falls to preach faith and love.

There are many such hermits still in the Greek Church. I have seen their eyries perched where only vultures should have their nests, on the cliffs of Caramania, and among the caverns of the Cyclades. Anthony and Stylites have indeed left behind them a track of evil glory, along which many a poor wretch still "crawls to heaven along the devil's trail." Are not lives wasted like these to be put into the account when we come to estimate the *Gesta Christi?* Must we not, looking on these and on the ten thousand, thousand hearts broken in monasteries and nunneries all over Europe, admit that historical Christianity has not only done good work in the world, but *bad* work also; and that, diverging widely from the Spirit of Christ, it has been far from uniformly beneficent?

It was while riding some hours from Mar Saba through the low hills before coming out on the blighted flats of the Dead Sea, that one of those pictures passed before me which are ever after hung up in the mind's gallery among the choicest of the spoils of Eastern travel. By some chance I

was alone, riding a few hundred yards in front of the caravan, when, turning the corner of a hill, I met a man approaching me, the only one I had seen for several hours since we passed a few black tents eight or ten miles away. He was a noble-looking young shepherd, dressed in the camel's-hair robe, and with the lithesome, powerful limbs and elastic step of the children of the desert. But the interest which attached to him was the errand on which he had manifestly been engaged on those Dead Sea plains from whence he was returning. Round his neck, and with its little limbs held gently by his hand, lay a lamb he had rescued and was doubtless carrying home. The little creature lay as if perfectly contented and happy, and the man looked pleased as he strode along lightly with his burden; and as I saluted him with the usual gesture of pointing to heart and head and the "salaam alik!", (Peace be with you), he responded with a smile and a kindly glance at the lamb, to which he saw my eyes were directed. It was actually the beautiful parable of the gospel acted out before my sight. Every particular was true to the story; the shepherd had doubtless left his "ninety-and-nine in the wilderness," round the black tents we had seen so far away, and had sought for the lost lamb "till he found it," where it must quickly have perished without his help, among those blighted plains. Literally, too, "when he had found it, he laid it on his shoulders, rejoicing."

After this beautiful sight which I have longed ever since for a painter's power to place on canvas (a better subject a thousand-fold than the cruel "*Scape-Goat*"), we reached the Dead Sea, and I managed to dip into it, after wading out a very long way in the shallow, bitter, biting water which stung my lips and nostrils, and tasted like a horrible mixture of quinine and salt. From the shore, all strewed with the white skeletons of trees washed down by the river, we made

our way (mostly galloping) in four hours to the Ford of Jordan; and there I had the privilege of another dip, or rather of seven dips, taken in commemoration of Naaman and to wash off the Dead Sea brine! It is the spot supposed to have witnessed the transit of Joshua and the baptisms of St. John. The following night our tents were pitched among the ruins of Jericho. The wonder is, not that the once flourishing city should be deserted and Herod's great amphitheatre there a ruinous heap, but that a town was ever built in such an insanitary place. Closed in by the mountains on every side from whence a fresh breeze could blow upon it, and open only to the unwholesome flats of the Dead Sea, the situation is pestilential.

Next day we rode back to Jerusalem through the desolate mountains of the Quarantania, where tradition places the mystic Fast and Temptation of Christ; a dreary, lonely, burning desert. Here, also, is the supposed scene of the parable of the Good Samaritan and the ruins of a great building, which may have been a Half-way House Inn beside the road, bear out the tradition. I have often reflected that orthodox divines miss half the point of that beautiful story when they omit to mark the fact that the Samaritans were, in Christ's time, boycotted by the Jews *as heretics;* and that it was precisely one of these *heretics* who was made by Jesus the type for all time of genuine philanthropy,—in direct and purposeful contrast to the representatives of Judaic orthodoxy, the Priest and Levite.

The sun on my head during the latter hours of the ride became intolerable; not like English heat, however excessive, but roasting my very brains through all the folds of linen on my hat and of a damp handkerchief within. It was like sitting before a kitchen fire with one's head in the position proper for a leg of mutton! I felt it was a matter of life and death to escape, and galloped on by myself in advance for

many miles till suddenly I came, just under Bethany at the base of the Mount of Olives, to a magnificent ancient fountain, with the cool water gushing out, amid the massive old masonry. In a moment I leaped from my equally eager horse, threw off my hat and bared my neck and put my head under the blessed stream. Of course it was a perilous proceeding, but it saved me from a sunstroke.

That evening in Jerusalem I wished good-bye to my pleasant fellow-travellers, who were good enough to pass a vote of thanks to me for my "unvarying pluck and hilarity during the fatigues and dangers of the way!" I started next day for the two days' ride to Jaffa, accompanied only by a good Italian named Abengo, and a muleteer. There was a small war going on between some of the tribes on the way, and a certain chief named Aboo-Goosh (beneath whose robber's castle I had been pelted with stones on my way up to Jerusalem) was scouring the country. We passed, in the valley of Ajalon, some wounded men borne home from a battle, but otherwise encountered nothing alarming, and I obtained a great deal of curious information from Abengo, who knew Palestine intimately, and whose wife was a Christian woman of Nazareth. There is no use in repeating now records of a state of things which has been modified, no doubt, essentially in thirty years.

From Jaffa I sailed to Beyrout, and there, with kind help and advice from the Consul, I obtained the services of an old Turk as a Dragoman, and he and I and a muleteer laden with my bed and baggage started to cross Lebanon and make our way to Baalbec and, as I hoped, also to Damascus. The snows were still thick on the higher slopes of Lebanon, and after the excessive heat I had just undergone in Syria, the cold was trying. But the beauty and grandeur of those noble mountains, fringed below with fig and olive, and with their snowy summits rising height beyond height above, was com-

pensation for all hardship. By a curious chance, Lebanon was the first mountain range worthy of the name, which I had ever crossed. It was an introduction, of course, to a whole world of impressions and experiences.

I had a good many escapes in the course of my ride; there being nothing to be called a road over much of the way, and such path as there was being covered with snow or melting torrents. My strong little Syrian horse walked and scrambled and stumbled up beds of streams running down in cataracts over the rocks and boulders; and on one occasion he had to bear me down a very steep descent, where we floundered forward, sometimes up to his girths in the snow, in dread of descending with irresistible impetus to the edge of a precipice which yawned at the bottom. We did reach the verge in rather a shaky condition; but the good beast struggled hard to save himself, and turned at the critical moment safe along the edge.

A sad association belongs to my sojourn among the Maronites at Zachly; a large village on the further side of Lebanon, on the slopes of the Haraun. I slept there on my outward way in my tent pitched in an angle of grass outside one of the first houses, and on my return journey I obtained the use of the principal room of the same house from my kind hosts, as the cold outside was too considerable for tent life in comfort. Zachly was a very humble, simple place. The houses were all of mud, with flat roofs made of branches laid across and covered with more mud. A stem of a living tree usually stood in the middle of the house supporting the whole erection, which was divided into two or three chambers. A recess in the wall held piles of mats, and of the hard cushions made of raw cotton, which form both seats, beds, and pillows. The rough, unplaned door, with wooden lock, the window half stuffed up, the abundant population of cocks and hens, cats and dogs and rosy little boys and girls,

strongly reminded me of Balisk! I was welcomed most kindly after a brief negotiation with Hassan; and the simple women and girls clustered round me with soft words and presents of carrots and daffodils. One old woman having kissed my hands as a beginning, proceeded to put her arms round my neck and embrace me in a most motherly way. To amuse the party, I showed them my travelling bag, luncheon and writing and drawing apparatus, and made them taste my biscuits and smell my toilet vinegar. Screams of "Taib, Taib! Katiyeh!" (good, very good) rewarded my small efforts, and then I made them tell me all their names, which I wrote in my note-book. They were very pretty: Helena, Mareen, Yasmeen, Myrrhi, Maroon, Georgi, Malachee, Yussef, and several others, the last being Salieh, the young village priest, a tall, grand-looking young man with high cylindrical black hat, black robe and flowing brown hair. I made him a respectful salutation at which he seemed pleased. On my second visit to Zachly I attended the vesper service in his little chapel as the sun went down over Lebanon. It was a plain quadrangle of mud walls, brown without and white-washed within; a flat roof of branches and mortar; a post for support in the centre; a confessional at one side; a little lectern; an altar without crucifix and only decorated by two candlesticks; a jar of fresh daffodils; some poor prints; a blue tea-cup for sacramental plate, and a little cottage-window into which the setting sun was shining softly;—such was the chapel of Zachly. A few men knelt to the left, a few women to the right; in front of the altar was a group of children, also kneeling, and waiting to take their part in the service. At the lectern stood the noble figure of young Papas Salieh, leaning on one of the crutches which in all Eastern churches are provided to relieve the fatigue of the attendants, who, like Abraham, "worship, leaning on the top of a staff." Beside the Papas stood a ragged but intelligent little acolyte,

who chanted very well, and on the other side of the lectern an aged peasant, who also took his part. The prayers were, of course, unintelligible to me, being in Arabic; but I recognised in the Gospel the chapter of genealogies in Luke, over whose hard names the priest helped his friend quite unaffectedly. The reading over, Papas Salieh took off his black and red cap, and, kneeling before the altar, commenced another chanted prayer, while the women beside me bowed till they kissed the ground in Eastern prostration, beating their breasts with resounding blows. The group of children made the responses at intervals; and then the priest blessed us, and the simple service was over, having occupied about twenty minutes. While we were departing, the Papas seated himself in the confessional and a man went immediately into the penitents' place beside him. There was something very affecting to me in this poor little church of clay, with its humble efforts at cleanliness and flowers and music; all built and adorned by the worshippers' own hands, and served by the young peasant priest, doubtless the son and brother of some of his own flock.

As I have said there are sad associations connected with this visit of mine to Zachly. A very short time afterwards the Druses came down with irresistible force,—massacred the greater number of the unhappy Maronites and burned the village. The spot where I had been so kindly received was left a heap of blackened ruins, and what became of sweet, motherly Helena and her dear little children and good Papas Salieh and the rest, I have never been able to learn.

It took six hours of hard riding in a bitter wind to carry me from Zachly to Baalbec; but anticipation bore me on wings, and to beguile the way I repeated to myself as my good memory permitted, the whole of Moore's poem of *Paradise*

*and the Peri*, culminating in the scene which the Peri beheld "When o'er the vale of Baalbec winging." In vain, however, I cross-questioned Hassan (we talked Italian *tant bien que mal*) about Peris. He had never heard of such beings. But of Djinns in general he knew only too much; and notably that they had built the vast ruins of Baalbec, which no mortal hands *could* have raised; and that to the present time they haunt them so constantly and in such terrific shape, that it is very perilous for anybody to go there alone and quite impossible to do so after nightfall. I had reason to bless this belief in the Djinns of Baalbec for it left me the undisturbed solitary enjoyment of the mighty enclosure within the Saracenic walls for the best part of two days, unvexed by the inquisitive presence or observation of the population of the Arab village outside.

To pitch my tent among the ruins, however, was more than I could bring Hassan to do by any cajoling, and I consented finally to sleep in a small cabin consisting of a single chamber of which I could lock the door inside. When I prepared for sleep on the hard cotton cushions laid over a stone bench, and with the two unglazed windows admitting volumes of cold air, I was frightened to find I had every symptom of approaching fever. Into what an awful position, —I reflected,—had I put myself, with no one but that old Turk Hassan, and the Arab from whom I had hired this little house for the night, to take care of me should I have a real bad fever, and be kept there between life and death for weeks! Reflecting what I could possibly do to avert the danger, brought on, of course, by cold and fatigue, I took from my bag the half-bottle of Raki (a very pure spirit made from rice) which my travelling friends had brought from the monastery at Mar Saba and had kindly shared with me; and to a large dose of this I was able to add some hot water from a sort of coffee-pot left, by

good luck, in the yet warm brazier of charcoal in the middle of my room. I drank my Raki-toddy to the last drop, and then slept the sleep of the just,—to awaken quite well the next morning! And if any of my teetotal friends think I did wrong to take it, I beg entirely to differ from them on the subject.

The days which I spent in and around Baalbec were more than repayment for the fatigues and perils of the passage of "Sainted Lebanon;" whose famous Cedars, by the way, I was unable to visit; the region where they stand being at that season too deeply covered with snow. Here is a description I gave of Baalbec to Harriet St. Leger just after my visit:—

"I had two wonderful days indeed in Baalbec. The number of the vast solitary ruins exceeded all my anticipations, and their grandeur impresses one as no remains less completely isolated can do. Imagine a space about that of Newbridge garden surrounded by enormous Saracenic walls with a sweet, bright brook running round it, and then left to entire solitude. A few cattle browse on the short grass, and now and then, I suppose, some one enters by one or other of the different gaps in the wall to look after them; but in the Temple of Jupiter, shut in by its great walls, to which the displacement of a single stone makes now the sole entrance, no one ever enters. The fear of Djinns renders the place even doubly alarming! Among the most awful things in Baalbec are stupendous subterranean tunnels running in various directions under the ruined city. I groped through several of them, they opened out with great doorways into others which, having no light, I would not explore, but which seemed abysses of awe! The stones of all these works are enormous. Those 5 or 6 feet and 12 or 15 feet long are among the smallest. In the temple were some which I could not span with five extensions of my arms, *i.e.*, something like 30 feet, but there are still larger elsewhere among the ruins."

The shafts of the columns of the two Temples,—the six left standing of the great Temple of the Sun which

> " Stand sublime
> Casting their shadows from on high
> Like Dials which the wayward Time
> Had raised to count his ages by "—

and those of the hypæthral temple of Zeus of which only a few have fallen, are alike miracles of size and perfection of moulding. The fragments of palaces reveal magnificence unparalleled. All these enormous edifices are wrought with such lavish luxuriance of imagination, such perfection of detail in harmony with the luscious Corinthian style which pervades the whole, that the idea of the Arabs that they are the work not of men but of Genii, seemed quite natural. I recalled what Vitruvius (who wrote about the time in which the best of these temples was erected), says of the methods by which, in his day, the largest stones were moved from quarries and lifted to their places, but I failed to comprehend how the colossal work was achieved here.

Passing out of the great ruined gateway I came to vast square and hexagonal courts with walls forming exedræ, loaded with profusion of ornaments; columns, entablatures, niches and seats overhung with carvings of garlands of flowers and the wings of fanciful creatures. Streets, gateways and palaces, hardly distinguishable in their ruin, follow on beyond the courts and portico. I climbed up a shattered stair to the summit of the Saracenic wall and felt a sort of shock to behold the living world below me; the glittering brook, the almond trees in blossom and Anti-Lebanon beyond. Here I caught sight of the well-known exquisite little circular temple with its colonnade of six Corinthian columns, of which the architraves are recurved inwards from column to column. If I am not mistaken a reproduction

of this lovely little building was set up in Kew Gardens in the last century.

Last of all I returned to the Temple of Zeus—or of Baal as it is sometimes called—to spend there in secure solitude (except for Djinns!) the closing hours of that long, rich day. The large walls are almost perfect; the colonnades of enormous pillars are mostly still standing. From the inner portal with its magnificent lintel half fallen from its place, the view is probably the finest of any fane of the ancient world, and was to me impressive beyond description. Even the spot where the statue of the god has stood can easily be traced. A great stone lying overturned on the pavement was doubtless the pedestal. I remained for hours in this temple; sometimes feebly trying to sketch what I saw, sometimes lost in ponderings on the faiths and worships of the past and present. A hawk, which probably had never before found a human visitor at even-tide in that weird place, came swooping over me; then gave a wild shriek and flew away. A little later the moon rose over the walls. The calm and silence and beauty of that scene can never be forgotten.

I was unable to pursue my journey to Damascus as I had designed. The muleteer, with all my baggage, contrived to miss us on the road among the hills in Anti-Lebanon; and, eventually, after another visit to the ruins and to the quarries from whence the vast stones were taken, I rode back to Zachly and thence (a two days' ride) over Lebanon to Beyrout.

I remained a few days at the hotel which then existed a mile from the town, while I waited for the steamer to take me to Athens, and much enjoyed the lovely scene of rich mulberry and almond gardens beside the shell-strewn strand, with snowy Lebanon behind, towering over the fir-woods into the deep blue sky. The Syrian peasant women are

sweet, courteous creatures. One day as I sat under a cactus-hedge reading Shelley, a pretty young mother came by, and after interchanging a "Peace be with you," proceeded unhesitatingly, and without a word of explanation, to deposit her baby,—Mustapha by name,—in my lap. I was very willing to nurse Mustapha, and we made friends at once as easily as his mother had done; and my heart was the better for the encounter!

After I had paid off Hassan and settled my account at the hotel, I found my financial condition exceedingly bad! I had just enough cash remaining to carry me (omitting a few meals) by second-class passage to Athens: which was the nearest place where I had opened a credit from my bankers, or where I had any introductions. There was nothing for it but to take a second-class place on board the Austrian Lloyd's steamer *L'Impératrice;* though it was not a pleasant arrangement, seeing that there was no other woman passenger and no stewardess on the ship at all. Nevertheless this was just one of the cases in which knocking about the world brought me favourable experience of human nature. The Captain of the *Impératrice*, an Italian gentleman, did his utmost, with extreme delicacy and good taste, to make my position comfortable. He ordered his own dinner to be served in the second cabin that he might preside at the table instead of one of his subordinates; and during the day he came often to see that I was well placed and shaded on deck, and to interchange a little pleasant talk, without intrusion.

It is truly one of the silliest of the many silly things in the education of women that we are taught little or nothing about the simplest matters of banking and stock-and-share buying and selling. I, who had always had money in abundance given me *straight into my hand*, knew absolutely nothing, when my father's death left me to arrange my affairs,

how such business is done, how shares are bought and sold, how credits are open at corresponding bankers; how, even, *to draw a cheque!* It all seemed to me a most perilous matter, and I feared that I might, in those remote regions, come to grief any day by the refusal of some local banker to honour my cheques or by the neglect of my London bankers to bespeak credit for me. My means were so narrow, and I had so little experience of the expenses of living and travelling, that I was greatly exercised as to my small concerns. I brought with me (generally tied by a string round my neck and concealed) a very valuable diamond ring to sell in case I came to real disaster; but it had been constantly worn by my mother; and I felt at Beyrout that, sooner than sell it, I would live on short commons for much more than a week!

One day of our voyage I spent at Cyprus where I admired the ancient church of San Lazzaro, half mosque, half church, and said to be the final grave of Lazarus. I had visited his, supposed, *temporary* one in Bethany. Another day I landed at Rhodes and was able to see the ruined street which bears over each house the arms of the Knight to whom it belonged. At the upper end of the way are still visible the arch and shattered relics of their church. Writing to Miss St. Leger March 28th, I described my environment thus:

"Dearest Harriet,

"Behold me seated *à la Turque* close to a party of Moslem gentlemen who alternately smoke and say their prayers all day long. We are steaming up through the lovely "Isles of Greece," having left Rhodes this morning and Cos an hour ago. As we pass each wild cape and green shore I take up a certain opera glass with 'H. S.' on the top of the box, and wish very much I could see through it the dear, kind eyes that used it once. They would be pleasanter to see than all these scenes, glorious as they are. The sun is going down into the calm blue sea and throwing purple

lights already on the countless islands through which the vessel winds its way. White sea-gulls follow us and beautiful little quaint-sailed boats appear every now and then round the islands. The peculiar beauty of this famous passage is derived, however, from the bold and varied outline of the islands and adjoining coast of Asia Minor. From little rocks not larger than the ship itself, up to large provinces with extensive towns like Cos, there is an endless variety and boldness of form. Ireland's Eye magnified to twice the height, is, I should say, the commonest type. In some almost inaccessible cliffs one sees hermitages; in others convents. I shall post this at Smyrna."

As the *Impératrice* stopped two or three days in the magnificent harbour of Smyrna, I had good opportunity to land and make my way to the scene of Polycarp's Martyrdom amid the colossal cypresses which outdo all those of Italy except the quincentenarians in the Giusti garden in Verona. It was Easter, and a ridiculous incident occurred on the Saturday. I was busy writing in the cabin of the *Impératrice* at mid-day, when, *subito!* there were explosions in our vessel and in a hundred other vessels in the harbour, again and again and again, as if a battle of Trafalgar were going on all round! I rushed on deck and found the steward standing calm and cheerful amid the terrific noise and smoke, "For God's sake what has happened?" I cried breathless. "Nothing, Signora, nothing! It is the Royal Salute all the ships are firing, of 21 guns."

"In honour of whom?" I asked, somewhat less alarmed.

"Iddio, Signora! Gesù Cristo, sicuro! È il momento della Resurrezione, si sà."

"O, no!" I said, "Not on Saturday. It was on Sunday, you know!"

"Che, che! Dicono forse cosi i Protestanti! Sappiamo noi altri, che era il Sabato."

I never got to the bottom of this mystery, but can testify that at Smyrna in 1858 there were many scores of these Royal Salutes (!) on Holy Saturday at noon in honour of the Resurrection.

It was one of the brightest hours of my happy life, that on which I stood on the deck of our ship at sunrise and passed under "Sunium's marble steep" and knew that I was approaching Athens. As we steamed up the gulf, the red clouds flamed over Parnes and Hymettus and lighted up the hills of Peloponnesus. The bright blue waves were dancing under our prow, and I could see over them far away the "rocky brow which looks o'er sea-born Salamis," where Xerxes sat on his silver-footed throne on such a morn as this. Above, to our right, over the olive woods with the rising sun behind it, like a crowned hill was the Acropolis of Athens and the Parthenon upon it.

Very soon I had landed at the Piræus and had engaged a carriage (there was no railway then) to take me to Athens. The drive was enchanting, between olive groves and vineyards, and with the Temple of Theseus and the buildings on the Acropolis coming into view as I approached Athens, till I was beside myself with delight and excitement. The first thing to do was to drive to the private house of the banker to whom I was recommended, to arouse the poor old gentleman (nothing loath, apparently to do business even at seven o'clock) to draw fifty sovereigns, and then to go to the French Hotel, choose a room with a fine view of the Parthenon, and to say to the master: "Send me the very best *déjeuner* you can provide and a bottle of Samian wine, and let this letter be taken to Mr. Finlay." That breakfast, with that view, was a feast of the gods after my many abstinencies, though I nearly "dashed down the cup of Samian wine," not in patriotic despair for Greece, but because it was so abominably

bad that no poetry could have been made out of it by Anacreon himself. Hardly had I finished my meal, when Mr. Finlay appeared at my door, having hurried with infinite kindness to welcome me, and do honour to the introduction of his cousin, my dear sister-in-law. "I put myself," said he, "at your orders for the day. We will go wherever you please."

It would be unfair to inflict on the reader a detailed account of all I saw at Athens under the admirable guidance of Mr. Finlay during a week of intensest enjoyment. Mr. Finlay (it can scarcely yet be forgotten) went out to Greece a few weeks or months before Byron and fought with him and after him, through the War of Independence. After this, having married a beautiful Armenian lady, he bought much land in Eubœa, built himself a handsome house in Athens and lived there for the rest of his life, writing his great History (in five volumes) of *Greece under Foreign Domination;* making a magnificent collection of coins; and acting for many years as the *Times* correspondent at Athens. He was not only a highly erudite archæologist, but an enthusiast for the land of his adoption and all its triumphs of art; in short, the best of all possible ciceroni. I was fortunately not wholly unprepared to profit by his learned expositions and delicate observation on the architecture of the glorious ruins, for I had made copies of prints of all at Athens and elsewhere in Greece with ground-plans and restorations and notes of everything I could learn about them, many years before when I was wont to amuse myself with drawing, while my mother read to me. I found that I knew beforehand nearly exactly what remained of the Parthenon and the Erechtheum and the Temple of Victory, the Propylæum on the Acropolis and the Theseium below; and it was of intensest interest to me to learn, under Mr. Finlay's guidance, precisely where the Elgin Marbles had stood, and to note the extraordinary fact, on which he insisted much,—that there is not

a single straight line in the whole Parthenon. *Everything*, down to single stones in the entablatures and friezes, is curved, in some cases, he felt assured, *after* they had been placed *in situ*. The extreme entasis of the columns and the great pyramidal inclination of the whole building, were most noticeable when attention was once drawn to them. As we approached the majestic ruins of Adrian's Temple of Jupiter on the plains below, (that enormous temple which had double rows of columns surrounding it and quadruple rows in front and back, of ten columns each) I exclaimed "Why! there ought to be *three* columns standing at that far angle!" "Quite true," said Mr. Finlay, "one of them fell just six weeks ago."

Since this visit of mine to Athens a vast deal has been done to clear away the remains of the Turkish tower and other barbaric buildings which obstructed and desecrated the summit of the Acropolis; and the fortunate visitor may now see the whole Propylæum and all the spaces open and free, beside examining the very numerous statues and bas reliefs some quaintly archaic, some of the best age and splendidly beautiful, which have been dug out in recent years in Greece.

I envy every visitor to Athens now, but console myself by procuring photographs of all the *finds* from those excellent artists, Thomaïdes, Brothers.

Mr. Finlay spoke much of Byron in answer to my questions, and described him as a most singular combination of romance and astuteness. The Greeks imagined that a man capable of such enthusiasm as to go to war for their enfranchisement must have a rather soft head as well as warm heart; but they were much mistaken when they tried in their simplicity to *exploiter* him in matters of finance. There were self-devoted and disinterested patriots, but there were also (as was inevitable), among the insurgents many others who had a sharp eye to their own financial and political schemes

Byron saw through these men (Mr. Finlay said), with astounding quickness, and never allowed them to guide or get the better of him in any negotiation. About money matters he considered he was inclined to be "close-fisted." This was an opinion strongly confirmed to me some months later by Walter Savage Landor, who repeatedly remarked that Byron's behaviour in several occurrences, while in Italy, was far from liberal and that, luxuriously as he chose to live, he was by no means ready to pay freely for his luxury. Shelley on the contrary, though he lived most simply and was always hard pressed for money by William Godwin (who Fanny Kemble delightfully described to me *àpropos* of Dowden's *Memoirs*, as "one of those greatly gifted *and greatly borrowing* people!"), was punctilious to the last degree in paying his debts and even those of his friends. There was a story of a boat purchased by both Byron and Shelley which I cannot trust my memory to recall accurately as Mr. Landor told it to me, and which I do not exactly recognise in the *Memoirs*, but which certainly amounted to this,—that Byron left Shelley to pay for their joint purchase, and that Shelley did so, though at the time he was in extreme straits for money. All the impressions, I may here remark, which I gathered at that time in Greece and Italy (1858), where there were yet a few alive who personally knew both these great poets, was in favour of Shelley and against Byron. Talking over them many years afterwards with Mazzini I was startled by the vehemence with which he pronounced his preference for Byron, as the one who had tried to put his sympathy with a struggling nation into practice, and had died in the noble attempt. This was natural enough on the part of the Italian patriot; but I think the vanity and tendency to "pose," which formed so large a part of Byron's character had probably more to do with this last *acted* Canto of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*,

than Mazzini, (who had no such foibles) was likely to understand. The following curious glimpse of Byron at Venice before he went to Greece, occurs in an autograph letter in my possession, by Mrs. Hemans to the late Miss Margaret Lloyd. It seems worth quoting here.

"Bronwylfa, 7th April, 1819.

"Your affection for Lord Byron will not be much increased by the description I am going to transcribe for you of his appearance and manners abroad. My sister, who is now at Venice, has sent me the following sketch of the *Giaour*:— 'We were presented at the Governor's, after which we went to a conversazione at Madlle. Benzoni's, where we saw Lord Byron; and now my curiosity is gratified, I have no wish ever to see h'm again. A more wretched, depraved-looking countenance it is impossible to imagine! His hair streaming almost down to his shoulders and his whole appearance slovenly and even dirty. Still there is a something which impels you to look at his face, although it inspires you with aversion, a something entirely different from any expression on any countenance I ever beheld before. His character, I hear, is worse than ever; dreadful it must be, since everyone says he is the most dissipated person in Italy, exceeding even the Italians themselves.'"

Shortly before my visit to Athens an article, or book, by Mr. Trelawney had been published in England, in which that writer asserted that Byron's lame leg was a most portentous deformity, like the fleshless leg of a Satyr. I mentioned this to Mr. Finlay, who laughed, and said: "That reminds me of what Bryon said of Trelawney; 'If we could but make Trelawney wash his hands and speak the truth, we might make a gentleman of him!' Of course," continued Mr. Finlay, "I saw Byron's legs scores of times, for we bathed

together daily whenever we were near the sea or a river, and there was nothing wrong with the *leg*, only an ordinary and not very bad, club-*foot*."

Among the interesting facts which Mr. Finlay gave me as the results of his historical researches in Greece was that a school of philosophy continued to be held in the Groves of the Academè (through which we were walking at the moment), for 900 years from the time of Plato. A fine collection of gold and silver coins which he had made, afforded, under his guidance, a sort of running commentary on the history of the Byzantine Empire. There were series of three and four reigns during which the coins became visibly worse and worse, till at last there was no silver in them at all, only base metal of some sort; and then, things having come to the worst, there was a revolution, a new dynasty, and a brand new and pure coinage.

The kindness of this very able man and of his charming wife was not limited to playing cicerone to me. Nothing could exceed their hospitality. The first day I dined at their house a party of agreeable and particularly fashionably dressed Greek ladies and gentlemen were assembled. As we waited for dinner the door opened and a magnificent figure appeared, whom I naturally took for, at least, an Albanian Chief, and prepared myself for an interesting presentation. He wore a short green velvet jacket covered with gold embroidery, a crimson sash, an enormous white muslin *kilt* (I afterwards learned it contained 60 yards of muslin, and that the washing thereof is a function of the highest responsibility), and leggings of green and gold to match the jacket. One moment this splendid vision stood six feet high in the doorway; the next he bowed profoundly and pronounced the consecrated formula:—

"*Madame est servie!*"

and we went to dinner, where he waited admirably.

Some year or two later, after I had published some records of my travels, and sent them to Mr. Finlay, I received from him the following letter :—

"Athens, 26th May

"My dear Miss Cobbe,

"Baron von Schmidthals sent me your letter of the 18th April with the *Cities of the Past* yesterday ; his baggage having been detained at Syria. The post brought me *Fraser* with a '*Day at Athens*' with due regularity, and now accept my sincere thanks for both. I am ashamed of my neglect in not thanking you sooner for *Fraser*, but I did not know your address. I felt grateful for it, having been very, very often tired of 'Days at Athens!' It was a treat to meet so pleasant a 'day,' and have another pleasant day recalled. Others to whom I lent *Fraser*, told me the 'Day' was delightful. I had heard of your misfortune but I hoped you had entirely recovered, and I regret to hear that you use crutches still. I, too, am weak and can walk little, but my complaint is old age. The *Saturday Review* has told me that you have poured some valuable thoughts into the river that flows through ages.

'Rè degli altri; superbo, altero fiume!'

Solomon tried to couch its cataracts in vain. If you lived at Athens you would hardly believe that man can grow wiser by being made to think. It only makes him more wicked here in Greece. But the river of thought must be intended to fertilize the future.

"I wish I could send you some news that would interest or amuse you, but you may recollect that I live like a hermit and come into contact with society chiefly in the matter of politics which I cannot expect to render interesting to you and which is anything but an amusing subject to me; I being one of the Greek landlords on whose head Kings and National Assemblies practise the art of shaving. Our revolution has done some good by clearing away old

abuses, but the positive gain has been small. England sent us a boy-king, and Denmark with him a Count Sponneck, whom the Greeks, not inaccurately, call his '*alter* NEMO.' Still, though we are all very much dissatisfied, I fancy sometimes that fate has served Greece better than England, Denmark, or the National Assembly. The evils of this country were augmented by the devotion of the people to power and pelf, but devotion to nullity or its *alter ego* is a weak sentiment, and an empty treasury turns the devotion to pelf into useful channels.

"I was rather amused yesterday by learning that loyalty to King George has extended the commercial relations of the Greeks with the Turks. Greece has imported some boat-loads of myrtle branches to make triumphal arches at Syra where the King was expected yesterday. Queen Amalia disciplined King Otho's subjects to welcome him in this way. The idea of Greeks being 'green' in anything, though it was only loyalty, amused her in those days. I suppose she knows now that they were not so 'green' as their myrtles made them look! It is odd, however, to find that their outrageous loyalty succeeded in exterminating myrtle plants in the islands of the Ægean. And that they must now import their emblems of loyalty from the Sultan's dominions. If a new Venus rise out of the Grecian sea she will have to swim over to the Turkish coast to hide herself in myrtles. There is a new fact for Lord Strangford's oriental Chaos!

"My wife desires to be most kindly remembered to you.

"Believe me, my dear Miss Cobbe,

"Yours sincerely,

"GEORGE FINLAY."

I left Athens and my kind friends with great regret and embarked at the Piræus for Constantinople, but not before I had managed to secure a luxurious swim in one of the exquisite rocky coves along the coast near the Tomb of Themistocles.

Stamboul was rather a disappointment to me. The weather was cold and cloudy and unfit to display the beauty of the Golden Horn; and I went about with a *valet de place* in rather a disheartened way to see the Dolma Batchi Palace and a few other things accessible to me. The Scutari Hospital across the Bosphorus where Miss Nightingale had worked only four years before, of course, greatly attracted my interest. How much do all women owe to that brave heart who led them on so far on the road to their public duties, and who has paid for her marvellous achievements by just forty years of invalidism! Those pages of Kinglake's History in which he pays tribute to her power, and compares her great administrative triumph in bringing order out of chaos with the miserable failures of the male officials who had brought about the disastrous muddle, ought to be quoted again and again by all the friends of women, and never suffered to drop into oblivion.

Of course the reader will assume that I saw St. Sophia. But I did not do so, and to the last, I fear I shall owe a little grudge to the people whose extraordinary behaviour made me lose my sole opportunity of enjoying that most interesting sight. I told my *valet de place* to learn what parties of foreigners were going to obtain the needful firmaun for visiting the Mosque and to arrange for me in the usual way to join one of them, paying my share of the expense, which at that time amounted to £5. Some days were lost, and then I learned that there was only one party, consisting of American ladies and gentlemen, who were then intending to visit the place, and that for some reason their courier would not consent to my joining them. I thought it was some stupid *imbroglio* of servants wanting fees, and having the utmost confidence in American kindness and good manners, I called on the family in question at their hotel and begged they would do me the

favour to allow me to pay part of the £5, and to enter the doors of St. Sophia with them accordingly; at such time as might suit them. To my amazement the gentleman and ladies looked at each other; and then the gentleman spoke, "O! I leave *all that* to my courier!" "In that case, I said, I wish you good morning." It was a great bore for me, with my great love for architecture, to fail to see so unique a building, but I could not think of spending £5 on a firmaun for myself, and had no choice but to relinquish the hope of entering and merely walk round the Mosque and peep in where it was possible to do so. I was well cursed in doing this by the old Turks for my presumption!

Nemesis overtook these unmannerly people ere long, for they reached Florence a month after me and found I had naturally told my tale of disappointment to the Brownings, (whom they particularly desired to cultivate), the Somervilles, Trollopes and others who had become my friends; and I believe they heard a good deal of the matter. Mrs. Browning, I know, frankly expressed her astonishment at their behaviour; and Mrs. Somerville would have nothing to say to them. They sent me several messages of conciliation and apology, which of course I ignored. They had done a rude and unkind thing to an unknown and friendless woman. They were ready to make advances to one who had plenty of friends. It was the only case, in all my experience of Americans, in which I have found them wanting in either courtesy or kindness.

I had intended to go from Constantinople *viâ* the Black Sea and the Danube to Vienna and thence by the railway to Adelsberg and Trieste, but a cold, stormy March morning rendered that excursion far less tempting than a return to the sunny waters of Greece; and, as I had nobody to consult, I simply embarked on a different steamer from the one I had

designed to take. At Syra (I think) I changed to the most luxurious and delightful vessel on which I have ever sailed—the Austrian Lloyd's *Neptune*, Captain Braun. It was splendidly equipped, even to a *camera oscura* on deck; and every arrangement for luxurious baths and good food was perfect, and the old Captain's attention and kindness to everyone extreme. I have still the picture of the *Neptune*, which he drew in my little sketch book for me. There were several very pleasant passengers on board, among others the Marquis of Headfort (nephew of our old neighbour at Newbridge, Mr. Taylor of Ardgillan) and Lady Headfort, who had gone through awful experiences in India, when married to her first husband, Sir William Macnaghten. It was said that when Sir William was cut to pieces, she offered large rewards for the poor relics and received them all, *except his head*. Months afterwards when she had returned to Calcutta and was expecting some ordinary box of clothes, or the like, she opened a parcel hastily, and was suddenly confronted with the frightful spectacle of her husband's half-preserved head!

Whether this story be true I cannot say, but Lady Headfort made herself a most agreeable fellow passenger, and we sat up every night till the small hours telling ghost stories. At Corfu I paid a visit to my father's cousin, Lady Emily Kozzaris (*née* Trench) who I had known at Newbridge and who welcomed me as a bit of Ireland, fallen on her

> "Isle under Ionian skies
> Beautiful as a wreck of paradise."

I seemed to be *en pays de connaissance* once more. After two days in Trieste I went up by rail to Adelsberg through the extraordinary district (geologically speaking) of Carniola, where the whole superficial area of the ground is perfectly barren but honey-combed with circular holes of varying

depths and size and of the shape of inverted truncated cones; the bottoms of each being highly fertile and cultivated like gardens.

The Cavern of Adelsberg was to me one of the most fearsome places in the world. I cannot give any accurate description of it for the sense of awe which always seizes me in the darkness and foul air of caverns and tunnels and pyramids, renders me incapable of listening to details of heights and lengths. I wrote my recollections not long afterwards.

"There were long, long galleries, and chambers, and domes succeeding one another, as it seemed, for ever. Sometimes narrow and low, compelling the visitor to bend and climb; sometimes so wide and lofty that the eye vainly sought to pierce the expanse. And through all the endless labyrinth appeared vaguely in the gloom the forms taken by the stalactites, now white as salt, now yellow and stained as if with age,—representing to the fancy all conceivable objects of earth and sea, piled up in this cave as if in some vast lumberhouse of creation. It was Chaos, when yet all things slept in darkness waiting the fiat of existence. It was the final Ruin when all things shall return to everlasting night, and man and all his works grow into stone and lie buried beside the mammoth and the ichthyosaur. Here were temples and tombs, and vast dim faces, and giant forms lying prone and headless, and huge lions sleeping in dark dens, and white ghosts with phantom raiment flickering in the gloom. And through the caverns, amid all the forms of awe and wonder, rolled a river black as midnight; a deep and rapid river which broke here and there over the rocks as in mockery of the sunny waterfalls of the woods, and gleamed for a moment, white and ghastly, then plunged lower under the black arch into

'Caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.'

"It is in this deadly river, which never reflects the light of day, that live those strange fleshy lizards without eyes, and seemingly without natural skin, hideous reptiles which have dwelt in darkness from unknown ages, till the organs of sight are effaced.*

"Over this dismal Styx the traveller passes on further and further into the cavern, through seemingly endless corridors and vast cathedral aisles and halls without number. One of these large spaces is so enormous that it seemed as if St. Peter's whole church and dome could lie beneath it. The men who were with us scaled the walls threw coloured lights around and rockets up to the roof and dimly revealed the stupendous expanse; an underground hall, where Eblis and all his peers might hold the councils of hell. Further on yet, through more corridors, more chambers and aisles and domes, with the couchant lions and the altar-tombs and the ghosts and the great white faces all around; and then into a cavern, more lately found than the rest, where the white and yellow marble took forms of screens and organ pipes and richest Gothic tracery of windows,—the region where the Genius of the Cavern had made his royal Oratory. It was all a great, dim, uneasy dream. Things were, and were not. As in dreams we picture places and identify them with those of waking life in some strange unreal identity, while in every particular they vary from the actual place; and as also in dreams we think we have beheld the same objects over and over again, while we only dream we see them, and go on wandering further and further, seeking for some unknown thing, and finding, not that which we seek, but every other thing in existence, and pass through all manner of narrow doors and impenetrable screens, and men speak to us and we cannot hear them, and show us open graves holding dead corpses whose features we cannot discern, and all the world is dim and dark and full of doubt and dread—even so is the Cavern of Adelsberg."

* The Proteus Anguinus.

Returning to Trieste I passed on to Venice, the beauty of which I *learned* (rather slowly perhaps), to feel by degrees as I rowed in my gondola from church to church and from gallery to palace. The Austrians were then masters of the city, and it was no doubt German music which I heard for the first time at the church of the Scalzi, very finely performed. It was not solemn in the usual English style of sacred music; (I dare say it was not strictly *sacred* music at all, perhaps quite a profane opera!) but, in the mood I was in, it seemed to me to have a great sanctity of its own; to be a *Week-day Song of Heaven.* This was one of the rare occasions in my life in which music has reached the deeper springs in me and it affected me very much. I suppose as the daffodils did Wordsworth.

Naturally being again in a town and at a good hotel, I resumed better clothes than I had worn in my rough rides, and they were, of course that year, deep mourning with much crape on them. I imagine it must have been this English mourning apparel which provoked among the colour-loving Venetians a strange display of *Heteropathy*,—that deep-seated animal instinct of hatred and anger against grief and suffering, the exact reverse of *sympathy*, which causes brutes and birds to gore and peck and slay their diseased and dying companions and brutal men to trample on their weeping, starving wives. I was walking alone rather sadly, bent down over the shells on the beach of the Lido, comparing them in my mind to the old venuses and pectens and beautiful pholases which I used to collect on my father's long stretch of sandy shore in Ireland,—when suddenly I found myself assailed with a shower of stones. Looking up, I saw a little crowd of women and boys jeering at me and pelting me with whatever they could pick up. Of course they could not really hurt me, but after an effort or two at remonstrance, I was fain to give up my walk

and return to my gondola and to Venice. Years afterwards, speaking of this incident to Gibson, he told me he had seen at Venice a much worse scene, for the victim was a poor helpless dog which had somehow got into a position from whence it could not escape, and the miserable, hooting, laughing crowd deliberately *stoned it to death*. The dog looked from one to another of its persecutors as if appealing for mercy and saying, "What have I done to deserve this?" But there was no mercy in those hard hearts.

Ever since I sat on the spot where St. Stephen was stoned, I have felt that that particular form of death must have been one of the most *morally* trying and dreadful to the sufferer, and the most utterly destructive of the finer instincts in those who inflicted it. If Jews be, as alleged, more prone to cruelty than other nations, the fact seems to me almost explained by the "set of the brains" of a race accustomed to account it a duty to join in stoning an offender to death and watching pitilessly his agonies when mangled, blinded, deafened and bleeding he lies crushed on the ground.

From Venice I travelled very pleasantly in a returning vettura which I was fortunate enough to engage, by Padua and Ferrara over the Apennines to Florence. One day I walked a long way in front during my vetturino's dinner-hour, and made friends with some poor peasants who welcomed me to their house and to a share of their meal of Polenta and wine. The Polenta was much inferior to Irish oatmeal stirabout or Scotch porridge; and the black wine was like the coarsest vinegar. I tried in vain, out of good manners to drink it. The lives of these poor *contadini* are obviously in all ways cruelly hard.

Spending one night in a desolate "ramshackle" inn on the road high up on the Apennines, I sat up late writing a description of the place (as "creepy" as I could make it!) to amuse my mother's dear old servant "Joney," who

possessed a volume of Washington Irving's stories wherein that of the "*Inn at Terracina*" had served constantly to excite delightful awe in her breast and in my own as a child. I took my letter next day with me to post in Florence, but alas! found there waiting for me one from my brother announcing that our dear old servant was dead. She had never held up her head after I had left Newbridge, and had ceased to drop into her cottage for tea.

At Florence I remained many months (or rather on the hill of Bellosguardo above the city) and made some of the most precious friendships of my life; Mrs. Somerville's first of all. I also had the privilege to know at that time both Mr. and Mrs. Browning, Adolphus Trollope, Walter Savage Landor, Isa Blagden, Miss White (now Madame Villari), and many other very interesting men and women. I shall, however, write a separate chapter combining this and my subsequent visits to Italy.

Late in the summer I travelled with a party through Milan over St. Gothard to Lucerne, and thence to the Pays de Vaud, where I joined a very pleasant couple,—Rev. W. and Mrs. Biedermann,—in taking the *Château du Grand Clos*, in the Valley of the Rhone; a curious miniature French country-house, built some years before by the man who called himself Louis XVII., or Duc de Normandie; and who had collected (as we found) a considerable library of books, all relating to the French Revolution.

From Switzerland I travelled back to England *viâ* the Rhine with my dear American friends, the Apthorps, who had joined me at Montreux. The perils and fatigues of my eleven months of solitary wanderings were over. I was stronger and more active in body than I had ever been, and so enriched in mind and heart by the things I had seen and the people I had known, that I could afford to smile at the depression and loneliness of my departure.

As we approached the Black Forest I had a fancy to quit my kind companions for a few days; and leaving them to explore Strasburg and some other places, I went on to Heidelberg and thence made my way into the beautiful woods. The following lines were written there, September 23rd, 1858:—

## ALONE IN THE SCHWARZWALD.

Lord of the Forest Sanctuary! Thou
By the grey fathers of the world in these
Thine own self-fashioned shrines dimly adored,
"All-Father Odin," "Mover" of the spheres;
Zeus! Brahm! Ormusd! Lord of Light Divine!
God, blessed God! the Good One! Best of names,
By noblest Saxon race found Thee at last,—
O Father! when the slow revolving years
Bring forth the day when men shall see Thy face
Unveiled from superstition's web of errors old,
Shall they not seek Thee here amid the woods,
Rather than in the pillared aisle, or dome
By loftiest genius reared?

Six months have rolled
Since I stood solitary in the fane
Of desolate Baalbec. The huge walls closed
Round me sublime as when *millenniums past*
Lost nations worshipped there. *I sate beside*
The altar stone o'erthrown. *For hours I sate*
Until the homeward-winging *hawk at even*
Shrieked when he saw *me there, a human form*
Where human feet tread once perchance a year.
Then the moon slowly rose above the walls
And then I knelt. It was a glorious fane
All, all my own.

But not that grand Baalbec,
Nor Parthenon, nor Rome's stupendous pile,
Nor lovelier Milan, nor the Sepulchre
So dark and solemn where the Christ was laid,
Nor even yet that dreadful field of death
At Ghizeh where the eternal Pyramids
Have, from a world of graves, pointed to Heav'n
For fifty ages past,—not all these shrines
Are holy to my soul as are the woods.
Lo! how God Himself has planned this place
So that all sweet and calm and solemn thoughts
Should have their nests amid the shadowy trees!
How the rude work-day world is all closed out
By the thick curtained foliage, and the sky
Alone revealed, a deep zenith heaven,
Fitly beheld through clasped and upraised arms
Of prayer-like trees. There is no sound more loud
Than the low insect hum, the chirp of birds,
The rustling murmur of embracing boughs,
The gentle dropping of the autumn leaves.
The wood's sweet breath is incense. From the pines
And larch and chestnut come rich odours pure;
All things are pure and sweet and holy here.

I lie down underneath the firs. The moss
Makes richest cushion for my weary limbs;
Long I gaze upward while the dark green boughs
Moveless project against the azure sky,
Fringed with their russet cones. My satiate eyes
Sink down at length. I turn my cheek to earth.
What may this be, this sense of youth restored,
My happy childhood with its sunbright hours,
Returning once again as in a dream?
'Tis but the odour of the mossy ground,
The "field-smells known in infancy," when yet,
Our childish sports were near to mother Earth,
Our child-like hearts near to the God in Heaven.

# CHAPTER X.

## *BRISTOL.*

### *REFORMATORIES AND RAGGED SCHOOLS.*

## CHAPTER X.

### Reformatories and Ragged Schools at Bristol.

After I had spent two or three weeks once again at my old home after my long journey to visit my eldest brother and his wife, and also had seen my two other dear brothers, then married and settled in England with their children; the time came for me to begin my independent life as I had long planned it. I had taken my year's pilgrimage as a sort of conclusion to my self-education, and also because, at the beginning of it, I was in no state of health or spirits to throw myself into new work of any kind. Now I was well and strong, and full of hope of being of some little use in the world. I was at a very good age for making a fresh start; just 36; and I had my little independence of £200 a year which, though small, was enough to allow me to work how and where I pleased without need to earn anything. I may boast that I never got into debt in my life; never borrowed money from anybody; never even asked my brother for the advance of a week on the interest on my patrimony.

It had been somewhat of a difficulty to me after my home duties ended at my father's death, to decide where, with my heretical opinions, I could find a field for any kind of usefulness to my fellow creatures, but I fortunately heard through Harriet St. Leger and Lady Byron, that Miss Carpenter, of Bristol, was seeking for some lady to help in her Reformatory and Ragged School work. Miss Bathurst, who had joined her for the purpose, had died the previous year. The arrangement was, that we paid Miss Carpenter a moderate sum (30s.) a week for board and lodging in her house adjoining Red Lodge, and she provided us all day long

with abundant occupation. I had by mere chance read her "*Juvenile Delinquents*," and had admired the spirit of the book; but my special attraction to Miss Carpenter was the belief that I should find in her at once a very religious woman, and one so completely outside the pale of orthodoxy that I should be sure to meet from her the sympathy I had never yet been privileged to enjoy; and at all events be able to assist her labours with freedom of conscience.

My first interview with Miss Carpenter (in November, 1858) was in the doorway of my bedroom after my arrival at Red Lodge House; a small house in the same street as Red Lodge. She had been absent from home on business, and hastened upstairs to welcome me. It was rather a critical moment, for I had been asking myself anxiously—"What manner of woman shall I behold?" I knew I should see an able and an excellent person; but it is quite possible for able and excellent women to be far from agreeable companions for a *tête-à-tête* of years; and nothing short of this had I in contemplation. The first glimpse in that doorway set my fears at rest! The plain and careworn face, the figure which, Dr. Martineau says, had been "columnar" in youth, but which at fifty-two was angular and stooping, were yet all alive with feeling and power. Her large, light blue eyes, with their peculiar trick of showing the white beneath the iris, had an extraordinary faculty of taking possession of the person on whom they were fixed, like those of an amiable *Ancient Mariner* who only wanted to talk philanthropy, and not to tell stories of weird voyages and murdered albatrosses. There was humour, also, in every line of her face, and a readiness to catch the first gleam of a joke. But the prevailing characteristic of Mary Carpenter, as I came subsequently more perfectly to recognise, was a high and strong Resolution, which made her whole path much like that of a plough in a

well-drawn furrow, which goes straight on end its own beneficent way, and gently pushes aside into little ridges all intervening people and things.

Long after this first interview, Miss Elliot showed Miss Carpenter's photograph to the Master of Balliol, without telling him whom it represented. After looking at it carefully, he remarked, "This is the portrait of a person who lives *under high moral excitement.*" There could not be a truer summary of her habitual state.

Our days were very much alike, and "Sunday shone no Sabbath-day" for us. Our little household consisted of one honest girl (a certain excellent Marianne, who I often see now in her respectable widowhood and who well deserves commemoration) and two little convicted thieves from the Red Lodge. We assembled for prayers very early in the morning; and breakfast, during the winter months, was got over before daylight; Miss Carpenter always remarking brightly as she sat down, "How cheerful!" was the gas. After this there were classes at the different schools, endless arrangements and organisations, the looking-up of little truants from the Ragged Schools, and a good deal of business in the way of writing reports and so on. Altogether, nearly every hour of the day and week was pretty well mapped out, leaving only space for the brief dinner and tea; and at nine or ten o'clock at night, when we met at last, Miss Carpenter was often so exhausted that I have seen her fall asleep with the spoon half-way between her mouth and the cup of gruel which she ate for supper. Her habits were all of the simplest and most self-denying kind. Both by temperament and on principle she was essentially a Stoic. She had no sympathy at all with Asceticism (which is a very different thing, and implies a vivid sense of the attractiveness of luxury), and she strongly condemned fasting, and all such practices on the Zoroastrian principle, that they involve a culpable weakening of powers

which are intrusted to us for good use. But she was an ingrained Stoic, to whom all the minor comforts of life are simply indifferent, and who can scarcely even recognise the fact that other people take heed of them. She once, with great simplicity, made to me the grave observation that at a country house where she had just passed two or three days, "the ladies and gentlemen all came down dressed for dinner, and evidently thought the meal rather a pleasant part of the day!" For herself (as I often told her) she had no idea of any Feast except that of the Passover, and always ate with her loins girded and her umbrella at hand, ready to rush off to the Red Lodge, if not to the Red Sea. In vain I remonstrated on the unwholesomeness of the practice, and entreated on my own behalf to be allowed time to swallow my food, and also some food (in the shape of vegetables) to swallow, as well as the perpetual, too easily ordered, salt beef and ham. Next day after an appeal of this kind (made serious on my part by threats of gout), good Miss Carpenter greeted me with a complacent smile on my entry into our little dining-room. "You see I have not forgotten your wish for a dish of vegetables!" There, surely enough, on a cheese-plate, stood six little round radishes! Her special chair was a horsehair one with wooden arms, and on the seat she had placed a small square cushion, as hard as a board, likewise covered with horsehair. I took this up one day, and taunted her with the *Sybaritism* it betrayed; but she replied, with infinite simplicity, "Yes, indeed! I am sorry to say that since my illness I have been obliged to have recourse to these indulgencies (!). I used to try, like St. Paul, to 'endure hardness.'"

Her standard of conscientious rigour was even, it would appear, applicable to animals. I never saw a more ludicrous little scene than when she one day found my poor dog Hajjin, a splendid grey Pomeranian, lying on the broad of

her very broad back, luxuriating on the rug before a good fire. After gravely inspecting her for some moments, Miss Carpenter turned solemnly away, observing, in a tone of deep moral disapprobation, "Self-indulgent dog!"

Much of our work lay in a certain Ragged School in a filthy lane named St. James' Back, now happily swept from the face of the earth. The long line of Lewin's Mead beyond the chapel was bad enough, especially at nine or ten o'clock of a winter's night, when half the gas lamps were extinguished, and groups of drunken men and miserable women were to be found shouting, screaming and fighting before the dens of drink and infamy of which the street consisted. Miss Carpenter told me that a short time previously some Bow Street constables had been sent down to this place to ferret out a crime which had been committed there, and that they reported there was not in all London such a nest of wickedness as they had explored. The ordinary Bristol policemen were never to be seen at night in Lewin's Mead, and it was said they were afraid to show themselves in the place. But St. James' Back was a shade, I think, lower than Lewin's Mead; at all events it was further from the upper air of decent life; and in these horrid slums that dauntless woman had bought some tumble-down old buildings and turned them into schools—day-schools for girls and night-schools for boys, all the very sweepings of those wretched streets.

It was a wonderful spectacle to see Mary Carpenter sitting patiently before the large school-gallery in this place, teaching, singing, and praying with the wild street-boys, in spite of endless interruptions caused by such proceedings as shooting marbles into hats on the table behind her, whistling, stamping, fighting, shrieking out "Amen" in the middle of the prayer, and sometimes rising *en masse* and tearing, like a troop of bisons in hob-nailed shoes, down from the gallery, round the great schoolroom and down the stairs, out into the

street. These irrepressible outbreaks she bore with infinite good humour and, what seemed to me more marvellous still, she heeded, apparently, not at all the indescribable abomination of the odours of a tripe-and-trotter shop next door, wherein operations were frequently carried on which, together with the *bouquet du peuple* of the poor little unkempt scholars, rendered the school of a hot summer's evening little better than the ill-smelling *giro* of Dante's "Inferno." These trifles, however, scarcely even attracted Mary Carpenter's attention, fixed as it was on the possibility of "taking hold" (as she used to say) of one little urchin or another, on whom, for the moment her hopes were fixed.

The droll things which daily occurred in these schools, and the wonderful replies received from the scholars to questions testing their information, amused her intensely and the more unruly were the young scamps, the more, I think, in her secret heart, she liked them, and gloried in taming them. She used to say, "Only to get them to use the *school comb* is something!" There was the boy who defined Conscience to me as "a thing a gen'elman hasn't got, who, when a boy finds his purse and gives it back to him, doesn't give the boy sixpence." There was the boy who, sharing in my Sunday evening lecture on "Thankfulness,"—wherein I had pointed out the grass and blossoming trees on the Downs as subjects for praise,—was interrogated as to which pleasure he enjoyed most in the course of the year? replied candidly, "Cock-fightin', ma'am. There's a pit up by the 'Black Boy' as is worth anythink in Brissel!"

The clergy troubled us little. One day an impressive young curate entered and sat silent, sternly critical to note what heresies were being instilled into the minds of his flock. "I am giving a lesson on Palestine," I said; "I have just been at Jerusalem." "*In what sense?*" said the awful young man, darkly discerning some mysticism (of

the Swedenborgian kind, perhaps) beneath the simple statement. The boys who were dismissed from the school for obstreperous behaviour were a great difficulty to us, usually employing themselves in shouting and hammering at the door. One winter's night when it was raining heavily, as I was passing through Lewin's Mead, I was greeted by a chorus of voices, "Cob-web, Cob-web!" emanating from the depths of a black archway. Standing still under my umbrella, and looking down the cavern, I remarked, "Don't you think I must be a little tougher than a cobweb to come out such a night as this to teach such little scamps as you?"

"Indeed you is, Mum; that's true! And stouter too!"

"Well, don't you think you would be more comfortable in that nice warm schoolroom than in this dark, cold place?"

"Yes, 'm, we would."

"You'll have to promise to be tremendously good, I can tell you, if I bring you in again. Will you promise?"

Vows of everlasting order and obedience were tendered; and, to Miss Carpenter's intense amusement, I came into St. James' Back, followed by a whole troop of little outlaws reduced to temporary subjection. At all events they never shouted "Cob-web" again. Indeed, at all times the events of the day's work, if they bordered on the ludicrous (as was often the case), provoked her laughter till the tears ran down her cheeks. One night she sat grieving over a piece of ingratitude on the part of one of her teachers, and told me she had given him some invitation for the purpose of conciliating him and "heaping coals of fire on his head.' "It will take another scuttle, my dear friend," I remarked; and thereupon her tears stopped, and she burst into a hearty fit of laughter. Next evening she said to me dolorously, "I tried that other scuttle, but it was no go!"

Of course, like every mortal, Mary Carpenter had *les défauts de ses qualités*. Her absorption in her work always blinded her to the fact that other people might possibly be bored by hearing of it incessantly.

In India, I have been told that a Governor of Madras observed, after her visit, "It is very astonishing; I listened to all Miss Carpenter had to tell me, but when I began to tell her what *I* knew of this country, she dropped asleep." Indeed, the poor wearied and overworked brain, when it had made its effort, generally collapsed, and in two or three minutes, after "holding you with her eye" through a long philanthropic history, Miss Carpenter might be seen to be, to all intents and purposes, asleep.

On one occasion, that most loveable old man, Samuel J. May, of Syracuse, came to pass two or three days at Red Lodge House, and Miss Carpenter was naturally delighted to take him about and show him her schools and explain everything to him. Mr. May listened with great interest for a time, but at last his attention flagged and two or three times he turned to me; "When can we have our talk, which Theodore Parker promised me?" "Oh, by-and-by," Miss Carpenter always interposed; till one day, after we had visited St. James' Back, we arrived all three at the foot of the tremendous stairs, almost like those of the Trinità, which then existed in Bristol, and were called the Christmas Steps. "*Now*, Mr. May and Miss Cobbe" (said Mary Carpenter, cheerfully), "you can have your talk." And so we had—till we got to the top, when she resumed the guidance of the conversation. Good jokes were often made of this little weakness, but it had its pathetic side. Never was there a word of real egotism in her eager talk, or the evidence of the slightest wish to magnify her own doings, or to impress her hearers with her immense share in the public benefits she described. It was her deep conviction that to turn one of these poor

sinners from the errors of its ways, to reach to the roots of the misery and corruption of the "perishing and dangerous classes," was the most important work which could possibly be undertaken; and she, very naturally, in consequence made it the most prominent, indeed, almost the sole, subject of discourse. I was once in her company at Aubrey House in London, when there happened to be present half-a-dozen people, each one devoted to some special political, religious or moral agitation. Miss Carpenter remarked in a pause in the conversation; "It is a thousand pities that everybody will not join and give the whole of their minds to the great cause of the age, because, if they would, we should carry it undoubtedly." "What *is* the great cause of the age?" we simultaneously exclaimed. "Parliamentary Reform?" said our host, Mr. Peter Taylor; "the Abolition of Slavery?" said Miss Remond, a Negress, Mrs. Taylor's companion; "Teetotalism?" said another; "Woman's Suffrage?" said another; "The conversion of the world to Theism?" said I. In the midst of the clamour, Miss Carpenter looked serenely round, "Why! the Industrial Schools Bill *of course!*" Nobody enjoyed the joke, when we all began to laugh, more than the reformer herself.

It was, above all, in the Red Lodge Reformatory that Mary Carpenter's work was at its highest. The spiritual interest she took in the poor little girls was, beyond words, admirable. When one of them whom she had hoped was really reformed fell back into thievish or other evil ways, her grief was a real *vicarious repentance* for the little sinner; a Christ-like sentiment infinitely sacred. Nor was she at all blind to the children's defects, or easily deceived by the usual sham reformations of such institutions. In one of her letters to me she wrote these wise words (July 9th, 1859):—

"I have pointed out in one of my reports why I have more trouble than others (*e.g.*, especially, Catholics). A system of

steady repression and order would make them sooner good scholars; but then I should not have the least confidence in the real change of their characters. Even with my free system in the Lodge, remember how little we knew of Hill's and Hawkins' real characters, until they were in the house? (Her own private house). I do not object to nature being kept under curbs of rule and order for a time, until some principles are sufficiently rooted to be appealed to. But *then* it must have play, or we cannot possibly tell what amount of reformation has taken place. The Catholics have an enormous artificial help in their religion and priests; but I place no confidence in the slavish obedience they produce and the hypocrisy which I have generally found inseparable from Catholic influence. I would far rather have M. A. M'Intyre coolly say, 'I know it was wrong'" (a barring and bolting out) "and Anne Crooks in the cell for outrageous conduct, acknowledge the same—'I know it was wrong, but I am *not* sorry,' than any hypocritical and heartless acknowledgments."

Indeed nobody had a keener eye to detect cant of any kind, or a greater hatred of it. She told me one day of her visit to a celebrated institution, said to be supported semi-miraculously by answers to prayer in the specific shape of cheques. Miss Carpenter said that she asked the matron (or some other official) whether it was supported by voluntary subscriptions? "Oh, dear no! madam," the woman replied; "Do you not know it is entirely supported by Prayer?" "Oh, indeed," replied Miss Carpenter. "I dare say, however, when friends have once been moved to send you money, they continue to do so regularly?" "Yes, certainly they do." "And they mostly send it at the beginning of the year?" "Yes, yes, very regularly." "Ah, well, said Miss Carpenter, "when people send me money for Red Lodge under those circumstances, I enter them in my Reports as *Annual Subscribers!*"

When our poor children at last left the Reformatory, Mary Carpenter always watched their subsequent career with deep interest, gloried in receiving intelligence that they were behaving honestly and steadily, or deplored their backslidings in the contrary event. In short, her interest was truly *in the children themselves*, in their very souls; and not (as such philanthropy too often becomes) an interest in *her Institution*. Those who know most of such work will best understand how wide is the distinction.

But Mary Carpenter was not only the guardian and teacher of the poor young waifs and strays of Bristol when she had caught them in her charity-traps. She was also their unwearied advocate with one Government after another, and with every public man and magistrate whom she could reasonably or unreasonably attack on their behalf. Never was there such a case of the Widow and the Unjust Judge; till at last most English statesmen came to recognise her wisdom, and to yield readily to her pressure, and she was a "power in the State." As she wrote to me about her Industrial School, so was it in everything else:—

"The magistrates have been lapsing into their usual apathy; so I have got a piece of artillery to help me in the shape of Mr. M. D. Hill. . . . . They have found by painful experience that I cannot be made to rest while justice is not done to these poor children." (July 6th, 1859.)

And again, some years later, when I had told her I had sat at dinner beside a gentleman who had opposed many of her good projects:—

"I am very sorry you did not see through Mr. ——, and annihilate him! Of course, I shall never rest in this world till the children have their birthrights in this so-called Christian country; but my next mode of attack I have not decided on yet!" (February 13th, 1867.)

At last my residence under Mary Carpenter's roof came to a close. My health had broken down two or three times in succession under a *régime* for which neither habit nor constitution had fitted me, and my kind friend, Dr. Symonds', peremptory orders necessitated arrangements of meals which Miss Carpenter thought would occasion too much irregularity in her little household, which (it must be remembered) was also a branch of the Reformatory work. I also sadly perceived that I could be of no real comfort or service as an inmate of her house, though I could still help her, and perhaps more effectually, by attending her schools while living alone in the neighbourhood. Her overwrought and nervous temperament could ill bear the strain of a perpetual companionship, or even the idea that any one in her house might expect companionship from her; and if, while I was yet a stranger, she had found some fresh interest in my society, it doubtless ceased when I had been a twelvemonth under her roof, and knew everything which she could tell me about her work and plans. As I often told her (more in earnest than she supposed), I knew she would have been more interested in me had I been either more of a sinner or more of a saint!

And so, a few weeks later, the separation was made in all friendliness, and I went to live alone at Belgrave House, Durdham Down, where I took lodgings, still working pretty regularly at the Red Lodge and Ragged Schools, but gradually engaging more in Workhouse visiting and looking after friendless girls, so that my intercourse with Miss Carpenter became less and less frequent, though always cordial and pleasant.

Years afterwards when I had ceased to reside in the neighbourhood of Bristol, I enjoyed several times the pleasure of receiving visits from Miss Carpenter at my home in London, and hearing her accounts of her Indian travels and

other interests. In 1877, I went to Clifton to attend an Anti-vivisection meeting, and also one for Woman Suffrage; and at the latter of these I found myself with great pleasure on the same platform with Mary Carpenter. (She was also an Anti-vivisectionist and always signed our Memorials.) Her biographer and nephew, Professor Estlin Carpenter, while fully stating her recognition of the rightfulness of the demand for votes for women and also doing us the great service of printing Mr. Mill's most admirable letter to her on the subject (*Life*, p. 493); seems unaware that she ever publicly advocated the cause of political rights for women. But on this occasion, as I have said, she took her place on the platform of the West of England Branch of the Association, at its meeting in the Victoria Rooms; and, in my hearing, either proposed or seconded one of the resolutions demanding the franchise, adding a few words of cordial approval.

Before I returned to London on this occasion I called on Miss Carpenter, bringing with me a young niece. I found her at Red Lodge; and she insisted on my going with her over all our old haunts, and noting what changes and improvements she had made. I was tenderly touched by her great kindness to my young companion and to myself; and by the added softness and gentleness which years had brought to her. She expressed herself as very happy in every way; and, in truth, she seemed to me like one who had reached the Land of Beulah, and for whom there would be henceforth only peace within and around.

A few weeks later I was told that her servant had gone into her bedroom one morning and found her weeping for her brother, Philip Carpenter, of whose death she had just heard. The next morning the woman entered again at the same hour, but Mary Carpenter was lying quite still, in the posture in which she had lain in sleep. Her "six days' work" was

done. She had "gone home," and I doubt not "ta'en her wages." Here is the last letter she wrote to me:—

"Red Lodge House, Bristol,
"March 27th, 1877.

"Dear Miss Cobbe,

"There are some things of which the most clear and unanswerable reasoning could not convince me! One of these is, that a wise, all powerful and loving Father can create an immortal spirit for eternal misery. Perhaps you are wiser than I and more accessible to arguments (though I doubt this), and I send you the enclosed, which *I do not want back*. Gógurth's answer to such people is the best I ever heard—'If *you* are child of Devil—*good;* but *I* am child of God?'

"I was very glad to get a glimpse of you; I do not trouble you with my doings, knowing that you have enough of your own. You may like to see an abstract of my experience.

"Yours affectionately,
"M. C."

And here is a Poem which she gave me in MS. the day she wrote it. I do not think it has seen the light.

CHRISTMAS DAY PRAYER.

Dec. 25th, 1858.

Onward and upward, Heavenly Father, bear me,
Onward and upward bear me to my home;—
Onward and upward, be Thou ever near me,
While my beloved Father beckons me to come.

With Thy Holy Spirit, O do thou renew me!
Cleanse me from all that turneth me from Thee!
Guide me and guard me, lead me and subdue me
Till I love not aught that centres not in Thee!

Thou hast filled my soul with brightness and with beauty
Thou hast made me feel the sweetness of Thy love.
Purify my heart, devote me all to duty,
Sanctify me *wholly* for Thy realms above.

Holy, heavenly Parent of this earthborn spirit,
Onward and upward bear it to its home,
With Thy Firstborn Son eternal joys to inherit,
Where my blessed Father beckons me to come.—

December 25th, 1858. M. C.

The teaching work in the Red Lodge and the Ragged Schools, which I continued for a long time after leaving Miss Carpenter's house, was not, I have thought on calm reflection in after years, very well done by me. I have always lacked imagination enough to realize what are the mental limitations of children of the poorer classes; and in my eagerness to interest them and convey my thoughts, I know I often spoke over their heads, with too rapid utterance and using too many words not included in their vocabularies. I think my lessons amused and even sometimes delighted them; I was always told they loved them; but they enjoyed them rather I fear like fireworks than instruction! In the Red Lodge here were fifty poor little girls from 10 to 15 years of age vho constituted our *prisoners*. They were regularly committed o the Lodge as to jail, and when Miss Carpenter was absent I iad to keep the great door key. They used to sit on their enches in rows opposite to me in the beautiful black oak-annelled room of the Lodge, and read their dreary books, nd rejoice (I have no doubt) when I broke in with lanations and illustrations. Their poor faces, often scarred disease, and ill-shaped heads, were lifted up with erful looks to me, and I ploughed away would, trying o get *any* ideas into their minds; in accordance with Mary Carpenter's often repeated assurance that *anything whatever* which could pass from my thoughts to theirs would be a benefit, as supplying other *pabulum* than their past familiarity with all things evil. When we had got through one school reading book in this way I begged Miss Carpenter to find me another to afford a few fresh themes for observations, but no;

she preferred that I should go over the same again. Some of the children had singular histories. There was one little creature named Kitty, towards whom I confess my heart warmed especially, for her leonine disposition! Whenever there was some mischief discovered and the question asked, Who was in fault? invariably Kitty's hand went up: "I did it, ma'am;" and the penalty, even of incarceration in a certain dreaded "cell," was heroically endured. Kitty had been duly convicted at Sessions at the mature age of ten. Of what high crime and misdemeanour does the reader suppose? Pilfering, perhaps, a pocket handkerchief, or a penny? Not at all! Of nothing less than *Horse-stealing!* She and her brother, a mite two years younger than herself, were dispatched by their [illegible] parents to journey by one road, while they the[illegible] travelled by another, and on the way the children, who were, of course, directed to pick and steal all they could lay hands on, observed an old grey mare feeding in a field near the road and reflecting that a ride on horseback would be preferable to their pilgrimage on foot, they scrambled on the mare's back and by some means guided her down the road and went off in triumph. The aggrieved farmer to whom the mare belonged, brought the delinquents to justice, and after being tried with all the solemn forms of British law (their heads scarcely visible over the dock), the children were sent respectively to a P[illegible] Reformatory, [illegible] Lodge. We kept Kitty, of co[illegible] till her ful[illegible] when she was 15, and I am afr[illegible] Miss Carpen[illegible] strained the law a little in detaining her st[illegible] longer to allow her to gain more discretion before returning to those dreadful tramps, her parents. She herself, indeed, felt the danger as she grew older, and attached herself much to us both. A teacher whom I had imported from Ireland (one of my own village pupils from Donabate) told me that Kitty spoke of us with tears, and that she had seen her one

day, when given a stocking of mine whereupon to practice darning, furtively kissing it when she thought no one was observing her. She once said, "God bless Exeter jail! I should never have been here but for that." But at last, like George Elliot's *Gipsy*, the claims of race over-mastered all her other feelings. Kitty left us to rejoin her mother, who had perpetually called to see her; and a month or two later the poor child died of fever, caught in the wretched haunts of her family.

In a visit which I made to Red Lodge two years ago, I was struck by the improved physical aspect of the poor girls in the charge of our successors. The depressed, almost flattened form of head which the experienced eye of Sir Walter Crofton had caught (as I did), as a terrible "Note" of hereditary crime, was no longer visible; nor was the miserable blear-éyed, scrofulous appearance of the faces of many of my old pupils to be seen any more. Thirty years have, I hope and believe, raised even the very lowest stratum of the population of England.

Miss Carpenter's work in founding the first Reformatory for girl-criminals with the munificent aid of that generous woman, Lady Byron, has, beyond question, contributed in no mean degree to thinning the ranks of female crime during the last quarter of a century. Issuing from the Red Lodge at the end of their four or five years' term of confinement and instruction, the girls rarely returned, like poor Kitty, to their parents but passed first through a probation as Miss Carpenter's own servants in her private house, under good Marianne and her successors, and then into that humbler sort of domestic service which is best for girls of their class; I mean that wherein the mistress works and takes her meals with the servant. The pride and joy of these girls when they settled into steady usefulness was often a pleasure to witness. Miss Carpenter used to say,

"When I hear one of them talk of '*My* Kitchen,' I know it is all right!" Of course many of them eventually married respectably. On the whole I do not think that more than five, or at the outside ten per cent. fell into either crime or vice after leaving Red Lodge, and if we suppose that there have been something like 500 girls in the Reformatory since Lady Byron bought the Red Lodge and dedicated it to that benevolent use, we may fairly estimate, that Mary Carpenter *deflected* towards goodness the lives of at least four hundred and fifty women, who, if she had not stirred in their interest, would almost inevitably have spent their days in crime or vice, and ended them either in jail or in the "Black Ward" of the workhouse.

There is an epitaph on a good clergyman in one of the old churches of Bristol which I have always thought remarkably fine. It runs thus as far as I remember:—

> "Marble may moulder, monuments decay,
> Time sweeps memorials from the earth away;
> But lasting records are to Brydges given,
> The date Eternity, the archives Heaven;
> *There* living tablets with his worth engraved
> Stand forth for ever in the souls he saved."

We do not, in our day (unless we happen to belong to the Salvation Army) talk much about "saving souls" in the old Evangelical sense; and I, at least, hold very strongly, and have even preached to the purpose, that every human soul is "*Doomed to be saved*," destined by irrevocable Divine love and mercy to be sooner or later, in this world or far off worlds to come, brought like the Prodigal to the Father's feet. But there is a very real sense in which a true philanthropist "saves" his fellow men from moral evil—the sense in which Plutarch uses the word, and which every theology must accept, and in this sense I unhesitatingly affirm, that Mary Carpenter SAVED four hundred human souls.

It must be borne in mind also that it was not only in her own special Reformatory that her work was carried on. By advocating in her books and by her active public pleading the modification of the laws touching juvenile crime, she practically originated—in concert with Recorder Hill—the immense improvement which has taken place in the whole treatment of young criminals who, before her time, were simply sent to jail, and there too often stamped with the hall-mark of crime for life.

As regards the other part of Miss Carpenter's work which she permitted me to share,—the Ragged Schools and Street-boys' Sunday School in St. James's Back,—I laboured, of course, under the same disadvantage as in the Red Lodge of never clearly foreseeing how much would be understood of my words or ideas; and what would be most decidedly "caviar to the general." A ludicrous example of this occurred on one occasion. I always anxiously desired to instil into the minds of the children admiration for brave and noble deeds, and therefore told them stories of heroism whenever my subject afforded an opening for one. Having to give a lesson on France, and some boy asking a question about the Guillotine, I narrated, as vivaciously and dramatically as I knew how, the beautiful tale of the Nuns who chanted the *Te Deum* on the scaffold, till one voice after another was silenced for ever, and the brave Abbess still continued to sing the grand old hymn of Ambrose, till her turn came for death. I fondly hoped that some of my own feelings in describing the scene were communicated to my audience. But such hopes were dashed when, a day or two later, Miss Carpenter came home from her lesson at the school, and said: "My dear friend, what in the name of heaven can you have been teaching those boys? They were all excited about some lesson you had given them. 'They said you described cutting off a lot of

heads; and it was 'chop! and a head fell into the basket; and chop! another head in the basket! They said it was such a nice lesson!' But *whose* heads were cut off, or why, none of them remembered,—only chop! and a head fell in the basket!"

I consoled myself, however, for this and many another defeat by the belief that if my lessons did not much instruct their wild pates, their hearts were benefited in some small measure by being brought under my friendly influence. Miss Carpenter always made the schoolmaster of the Day School attend at our Sunday Night-School, fearing some wild outbreak of the 100 and odd boys and hobbledehoys who formed our congregation. The first Sunday, however, on which the school was given into my charge, I told the schoolmaster he might leave me and go home; and I then stopped alone (we had no assistants) with the little herd. My lessons, I am quite sure, were all the more impressive; and though Miss Carpenter was quite alarmed when she heard what I had done, she consented to my following my own system of confidence, and I never had reason to repent the adoption of it.

In my humble judgment (and I know it was also that of one much better able to judge, Lord Shaftesbury) these elastic and irregular Ragged Schools were far better institutions for the class for whom they were designed than the cast-iron Board Schools of our time. They were specially designed to *civilize* the children; to *tame* them enough to induce them, for example, to sit reasonably still on a bench for half-an-hour at a time; to wash their hands and faces; to comb their hair; to forbear from shouting, singing, "turning wheels," throwing marbles, making faces, or similarly disporting themselves, while in school; after which preliminaries they began to acquire the art of learning lessons. It was not exactly Education in the literary sense, but it was a Training,

without which as a substructure the "Three R's" are of little avail,—if we may believe in William of Wykeham's axiom that "Manners makyth Manne."

Another, and, as I think, great merit of the Ragged School system was, that decent and self-respecting parents who strove to keep their children from the contamination of the gutter and were willing to pay their penny a week to send them to school, were not obliged, as now, to suffer their boys and girls to associate in the Board Schools with the very lowest and roughest of children fresh from the streets. Nothing has made me more indignant than a report I read some time ago in one of the newspapers of a poor widow who had "seen better days," being summoned and fined for engaging a non-certified poor governess to teach her little girl, rather than allow the child to attend the Board School and associate with the girls she would meet there. As if all the learning of a Porson, if he could pour it into a child's brain, would counterbalance in a young girl's mind the foul words and ideas familiar to the hapless children of the "perishing and dangerous classes!"

People talk seriously of the *physical* infection which may be conveyed where many young children are gathered in close contiguity. They would, if they knew more, much more anxiously deprecate the *moral* contagion which may be introduced into a school by a single girl who has been initiated into the mysteries of a vicious home. On two separate occasions Miss Carpenter and I were startled by what I can only describe as a portentous wave of evil which passed over the entire community of 50 girls in the Red Lodge. In each case it was undeniably traceable to the arrival of new comers who had been sent by mistake of magistrates to our Reformatory when they ought to have gone to a Penitentiary. It was impossible for us to guess how, with all the watchful guardianship of the teachers, these

unhappy girls had any opportunity for corrupting their companions, but that they did so (temporarily only, as they were immediately discovered and banished) I saw with my own eyes beyond possibility of mistake.

It came to me as part of my work with Miss Carpenter to visit the homes of all the children who attended our Ragged Schools—either Day Schools or Night Schools; nominally to see whether they belonged to the class which should properly benefit by gratuitous education, but also to find out whether I could do anything to amend their condition. Many were the lessons I learned respecting the "short" but by no means "simple" annals of the poor, when I made those visits all over the slums of Bristol.

The shoemakers were a very numerous and a very miserable class among the parents of our pupils. When anything interfered with trade they were at once thrown into complete idleness and destitution. Over and over again I tried to get the poor fellows, when they sat listless and lamenting, to turn to any other kind of labour in their own line; to endeavour, *e.g.*, to make slippers for me, no matter how roughly, or to mend my boots; promising similar orders from friends. Not one would, or could, do anything but sew upper or under leathers, as the case might be! The men sat all day long when there was work, sewing in their stuffy rooms with their wives busy washing or attending to the children, and the whole place in a muddle; but they would converse eagerly and intelligently with me about politics or about other towns and countries, whereas the poor overworked women would never join in our talk. When I addressed them they at once called my attention to Jenny's torn frock and Tom's want of a new cap. One of these shoemakers, in whom I felt rather special interest, turned to me one day, looked me straight in the face, and said: "I want to ask you a question. Why does a lady like you come and sit and

talk to me?" I thought it a true token of confidence, and was glad I could answer honestly that I had come first to see about his children, but now came because I liked him.

Other cases which came to my knowledge in these rounds were dreadfully sad. In one poor room I found a woman who had been confined only a few days, sitting up in bed doing shopwork, her three or four *little* children all endeavouring to work likewise for the miserable pay. Her husband was out looking vainly for work. She showed me a sheaf of pawntickets for a large quantity of table and house linen and plated goods. Her husband and she had formerly kept a flourishing inn, but the railway had ruined it, and they had been obliged to give it up and come to live in Bristol, and get such work as they could do—at starvation wages. She was a gentle, delicate, fair woman, who had been lady's maid in a wealthy family known to me by name. I asked her did she not go out and bring the children to the Downs on a Sunday? "Ah! we tried it once or twice," she said, "but it was too terrible coming back to this room; we never go now."

Another case of extreme poverty was less tragic. There was a woman with three children whose husband was a soldier in India, to whom she longingly hoped to be eventually sent out by the military authorities. Meanwhile she was in extreme poverty in Bristol, and so was her friend, a fine young Irish woman. Their sole resource was a neighbour who possessed a pair of good sheets, and was willing to lend them to them *by day*, provided they were restored for her own use every night! This did not appear a very promising source of income, but the two friends contrived to make it one. They took the sheets of a morning to a pawnbroker who allowed them,—I think it was two shillings, upon them. With this they stocked a basket with oranges, apples, gooseberries, pins and needles, match boxes,

lace,—anything which could be had for such a price, according to the season. Then one or other of the friends arrayed herself in the solitary bonnet and shawl which they possessed between them, and sallied out for the day to dispose of her wares, while the other remained in their single room to take care of the children. The evening meal was bought and brought home by the outgoing friend with the proceeds of her day's sales, and then the sheets were redeemed from pawn at the price of a halfpenny each day and gratefully restored to the proprietor. This ingenious mode of filling five mouths went on, with a little help, when I came to know of it, in the way of a fresh-filled basket—for a whole winter. I thought it so curious that I described it to dear Harriet St. Leger one day when she was passing through Bristol and spent some hours with me. She was affected almost to tears and pushed into my hand, at the last moment at the Station, all the silver in her purse, to give to the friends. The money amounted to 7s. 6d., and when Harriet was gone I hastened to give it to the poor souls. It proved to be one of the numerous occasions in life in which I have experienced a sort of fatality, as if the chance of doing a bit of good to somebody were offered to us by Providence to take or leave and, if we postpone taking it, the chance is lost. I was tired, and the room inhabited by the poor women was, as it happened, at the other end of Bristol and I could not indulge myself with a fly, but I reflected that the money now really belonged to them, and I was bound to take it to them without delay. When I reached their room I found I was in the very nick of time. An order had come for the soldier's wife to present herself at some military office next day with her children, and with a certain "kit" of clothes and utensils for the voyage, and if all were right she would be sent to join her husband's regiment in India by a vessel to sail immediately. Without the proper outfit she would not have been taken;

and of course the poor soul had no kit and was in an agony of anxiety. Harriet's gift, with some trifling addition, happily supplied all that was wanted.

I did not see so much of drunkenness in Bristol as the prominence given to the subject by many philanthropists led me to expect. Of course I came across terrible cases of it now and then, as for example a little boy of ten at our Ragged School who begged Miss Carpenter to let him go home at mid-day, and on enquiry, it proved that he wanted to *release his mother*, whom he had locked in, dead-drunk, at nine in the morning. I also had a frightful experience of the case of the drunken wife of a poor man dying of agonizing cancer. The doctor who attended him told me that a little brandy was the only thing to help him, and I brought small quantities to him frequently, till, when I was leaving home for three weeks, I thought it best to give a whole bottle to his wife under injunctions to administer it by proper degrees. Happening to pass by the door of the wretched couple a day later, before I started, I saw a small crowd, and asked what had happened? "Mrs. Whale had been drinking and had fallen down stairs and broken her neck and was dead." Horror-struck I mounted the almost perpendicular stair and found it was so; the poor hapless husband was still alive, and my empty brandy bottle was on the table.

The other great form of vice however was thrust much more often on my notice—the ghastly ruin of the wretched girls who fell into it and the nameless damnation of the hags and Jews who traded on their souls and bodies. The cruelty of the fate of some of the young women was often piteous. Thankful I am that the law for assaults has been made since those days far more stringent and is oftener put in force. There were stories which came to my personal knowledge which would draw tears from many eyes were I to tell them, but the more cruel the wrong done, the more difficult it

generally proved to induce anybody to undertake to receive the victims into their houses on any terms.

A gentleman whom I met in Italy, who knew Bristol well, told me he had watched a poor young sailor's destruction under the influence of some of the eighteen hundred miserable women then infesting the city. He had just been paid off and had received £73 for a long service at sea. Mr. Empson first saw him in the fangs of two of the wretched creatures, and next, six weeks later, he found him dying in the Infirmary, having spent every shilling of his money in drink and debauchery. He told Mr. Empson that, after the first week, he had never taken any food at all, but lived only on stimulants.

# CHAPTER XI.

## *BRISTOL.*

### *THE SICK IN WORKHOUSES.*

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### Bristol.—The Sick in Workhouses.

My new life on Durdham Down, though solitary, was a very happy one. I had two nice rooms in Belgrave House (then the last house on the road opening on the beautiful Downs from the Redland side), wherein a bright, excellent, pretty widow, Mrs. Stone, kept several suites of lodgings. It is not often, alas! that the relations of lodger and landlady are altogether pleasant, but in my case they were eminently so, and resulted in cordial and permanent mutual regard. My little bedroom opened by a French window on a balcony leading to a small garden, and beyond it I had an immense view of Bristol and the surrounding country, over the smoke of which the rising sun often made Turneresque pictures. My sitting room had a front and a corner view of the delightful Downs as far as "Cook's Folly" and the Nightingale Valley; and often, over the "Sea Wall," the setting sun went down in great glory. I walked down every week-day into Bristol (of course I needed more than ever to economise, and even the omnibus fare had to be considered), and went about my various avocations in the schools and workhouse till I could do no more, when I made my way home as cheaply as I could contrive, to dinner. I had my dear dog Hajjin, a lovely mouse-coloured Pomeranian, for companion at all times, and on Sundays we generally treated ourselves to a good ramble over the Downs and beyond them, perhaps as far as Kings'-Weston. The whole district is dear to me still.

The return to fresh air and to something like country life was delightful. It had been, I must avow, an immense

strain on my resolution to live in Bristol among all the sordid surroundings of Miss Carpenter's house; and when once in a way in those days I left them and caught a glimpse of the country, the effort to force myself back was a hard one. One soft spring day, I remember, I had gone across the Downs and sat for half an hour under a certain horse-chestnut tree, which was that day in all the exquisite beauty of its young green leaves. I felt *this* was all I wanted to be happy—merely to live in the beauty and peace of Nature, as of old at Newbridge; and I reflected that, of course, I *could* do it, at once, by breaking off with Miss Carpenter and giving up my work in hideous Bristol. But, *per contra*, I had concluded that this work was wanted to be done and that I could do it; and had seriously given myself to it, believing that so I could best do God's will. Thus there went on in my mind for a little while a very stiff fight, one of those which leave us either stronger or weaker ever after. *Now* at last, without any effort on my part, the bond which held me to live in Red Lodge House, was loosened, and I was able both to go on with my work in Bristol and also to breathe the fresh air in the morning and to see the sun rise and set, and often to enjoy a healthful run over those beautiful Downs. By degrees, also, I made several friendships in the neighbourhood, some most dear and faithful ones which have lasted ever since; and many people were very kind to me and helped me in various ways in my work. I shall speak of these friends in another chapter.

One of my superstitions has long been that if any particular task seems to us at the first outlook specially against the grain, it will continually happen that in the order of things it comes knocking at our door and practically saying to our consciences: "Are you going to get up and do what is wanted, or sit still and please yourself with something else"?

In this guise of disagreeability, workhouse visiting first presented itself to me. Miss Carpenter frequently mentioned the workhouse as a place which ought to be looked after; and which she believed sadly wanted voluntary inspection; but the very name conveyed to me such an impression of dreary hopelessness that I shrank from the thought. When St. Paul coupled *Hope* with Faith and Charity he might have said "these three are one," for without the Hope of achieving some good (or at least of stopping some evil) it is hard to gird ourselves to any practical exertion for our fellow creatures. To lift up the criminal and perishing classes of the community and cut off the root of crime and vice by training children in morality and religion, this was a soul-inspiring idea. But to bring a small modicum of cheer to the aged and miserable paupers, who may be supposed generally to be undergoing the inevitable penalties of idle or drunken lives, was far from equally uplifting! However, my first chance-visit to St. Peter's in Bristol with Miss Elliot, showed me so much to be done, so many claims to sympathy and pity, and the sore lack of somebody, unconnected officially with the place, to meet them, that I at once felt that here I must put in my oar.

The condition of the English workhouses generally at that period (1859) was very different from what it is now. I visited many of them in the following year or two in London and the provincial towns, and *this* is what I saw. The sick lay on wretched beds, fit only for able-bodied tramps, and were nursed mostly by old pauper women of the very lowest class. The infirm wards were very frequently placed in the worst possible positions. I remember one (in London) which resounded all day long with din from an iron-foundry just beneath, so that one could not hear oneself speak; and another, of which the windows could not be opened in the hottest weather, because carpets were taken to be beaten in

the court below. The treatment of the pauper children was no less deplorable. They were joyless, spiritless little creatures, without "mothering" (as blessed Mrs. Senior said a few years later), without toys, without the chance of learning anything practical for use in after life, even to the lighting of a fire or cooking a potato. Their poor faces were often scarred by disease and half blinded by ophthalmia. The girls wore the hideous workhouse cotton frocks, not half warm enough to keep them healthy in those bare, draughty wards, and heavy hob-nailed shoes which acted like galley-slaves' bullets on their feet when they were turned to "play" in a high-walled, sunless yard, which was sometimes, as I have seen, six inches deep in coarse gravel. As to the infants, if they happened to have a good motherly matron it was so far well, though even she (mostly busy elsewhere) could do but little to make the crabbed old pauper nurses kind and patient. But how often, we might ask, were the workhouse matrons of those days really kind-hearted and motherly? Of course they were selected by the gentlemen guardians (there were no ladies then on the Boards) for quite other merits; and as Miss Carpenter once remarked to me from the depth of her experience:—

"*There never yet was man so clever but the Matron of an Institution could bamboozle him about every department of her business!*"

I have sat in the Infants' ward when an entire Board of about two dozen gentlemen tramped through it, for what they considered to be "inspection"; and anything more helpless and absurd than those masculine "authorities" appeared as they glanced at the little cots (never daring to open one of them) while the awakened babies screamed at them in chorus, it has seldom been my lot to witness.

On one occasion I visited an enormous workhouse in a provincial town where there were nearly 500 sick and infirm

patients. The Matron told me she had but lately been appointed to her post. I said, "It is a tremendously heavy charge for you, especially with only these pauper nurses. No doubt you have gone through a course of Hospital training, and know how to direct everything?"

"O, dear No! Madam!" replied the lady with a toss of her cap-strings; "I never nursed anybody I can assure you, except my 'usband, before I came here. It was misfortune brought me to this!"

How many other Masters and Matrons throughout the country received their appointments with as little fitness for them and simply as favours from influential or easy-going guardians, who may guess?

I had at this time become acquainted with the friend whose comradeship—cemented in the dreary wards of Bristol Workhouse more than 30 years ago—has been ever since one of the great pleasures of my life. All those who know Miss Elliot, daughter of the late Dean of Bristol, will admit that it would be very superfluous, not to say impertinent, to enlarge on the privileges of friendship with her. Miss Elliot was at that time living at the old Deanery close to Bristol Cathedral, and taking part in every good work which was going on in the city and neighbourhood. Among other things she had been teaching regularly for years in Miss Carpenter's Reformatory, regardless of the prejudice against her unitarianism; and one day she called at Miss Carpenter's house to ask her what was to be done with Kitty, who had been very naughty. Miss Carpenter asked her to see the lady who had come to work with her; and we met for the first time. Miss Elliot begged me to return her visit, and though nothing was further from my mind at that time than to enter into anything like society, I was tempted by the great attractions of my brilliant young friend and her sister and of the witty and wide-minded Dean, and before long (especially after I went to

live alone) I enjoyed much intercourse with the delightful household.

Miss Elliot had been in the habit of visiting a poor old woman named Mrs. Buckley, who had formerly lived close to the Deanery and had been removed to the workhouse; and one day she asked me to accompany her on her errand. This being over, I wandered off to the various wards where other poor women, and also the old and invalid men, spent their dreary days, and soon perceived how large a field was open for usefulness in the place.

The first matter which occupied us was the condition of the sick and infirm paupers; first of the women only; later of both men and women. The good Master and Matron admitted us quite freely to the wards, and we saw and knew everything which was going on. St. Peter's was an exceptional workhouse in many respects. The house was evidently at one time (about A.D. 1600, like Red Lodge) the mansion of some merchant prince of Bristol, erected in the midst of the city. The outer walls are still splendid specimens of old English wood and stonework; and, within, the Board-room exhibits still a magnificent chimney-piece. The larger part of the building, however, has been pulled about and fashioned into large wards, with oak-beamed rafters on the upper floor, and intricate stairs and passages in all directions. Able-bodied paupers and casuals were lodged elsewhere (at Stapleton Workhouse) and were not admitted here. There were only the sick, the aged, the infirm, the insane and epileptic patients and lying-in women.

Here are some notes of the inmates of this place by Miss Elliot:—

"1. An old woman of nearly 80, and as I thought beyond power of understanding me. Once however when I was saying 'good-bye' before an absence of some months, I was attracted by her feeble efforts to catch my attention. She

took my hand and gasped out 'God bless you; you wont find me when you come back. Thank you for coming.' I said most truly that I had never been any good to her, and how sorry I was I had never spoken to her. 'Oh, but I see your face; it is always a great pleasure and seems bright. I was praying for you last night. I don't sleep much of a night. I thank you for coming.' . . . . 2. A woman between fifty and sixty dying of liver disease. She had been early left a widow, had struggled bravely, and reared her son so well that he became foreman at one of the first printing establishments in the city. His master gave us an excellent character of him. The poor mother unhappily had some illness which long confined her in another hospital, and when she left it her son was dead; dead without her care in his last hours. The worn-out and broken-down mother, too weak and hopeless to work any longer, came to her last place of refuge in the workhouse. There, day by day, we found her *sitting* on the side of her bed, reading and trying to talk cheerfully, but always breaking down utterly when she came to speak of her son. 3. Opposite to her an old woman of ninety lies, too weak to sit up. One day, not thinking her asleep, I went to her bedside. I shall never forget the start of joy, the eager hand, 'Oh, Mary, Mary, you are come! Is it you at last?' 'Ah, poor dear,' said the women round her, 'she most always dreams of Mary. 'Tis her daughter, ladies, in London; she has written to her often, but don't get any answer.' The poor old woman made profuse apologies for her mistake, and laid her head wearily on the pillow where she had rested and dreamed, literally for years, of Mary.

"4. Further on is a girl of sixteen, paralyzed hopelessly for life. She had been maid-of-all-work in a family of twelve, and under her fearful drudgery had broken down thus early. 'Oh, ma'am,' she said with bursts of agony, 'I did work; I was always willing to work, if God would let me; I did work while I could, but I shall never get well; Never!' Alas, she may live as long as the poor cripple who died here last summer, after lying forty-six

years in the same bed, gazing on the same blank, white wall. 5. The most cheerful woman in the ward is one who can never rise from her bed; but she is a good needlewoman, and is constantly employed in making *shrouds*. It would seem as if the dismal work gave her an interest in something outside the ward, and she is quite eager when the demand for her manufacture is especially great!

"In the Surgical Ward are some eight or ten patients; all in painful diseases. One is a young girl dying of consumption, complicated with the most awful wounds on her poor limbs. 'But they don't hurt so bad,' she says, 'as any one would think who looked at them; and it will soon be all over. I was just thinking it was four years to-day since I was brought into the Penitentiary, (it was after an attempt to drown herself after a sad life at Aldershot); 'and now I have been here three years. God has been very good to me, and brought me safe when I didn't deserve it.' Over her head stands a print of the Lost Sheep, and she likes to have that parable read to her. Very soon that sweet, fair young face, as innocent as I have ever seen in the world, will bear no more marks of pain. Life's whole tragedy will have been ended, and she is only just nineteen!"

[A few weeks later, on Easter Sunday morning when the rising sun was shining into the curtainless ward, the few patients who were awake saw this poor girl, who had not been able to raise herself or sit upright for many weeks, suddenly start forward, sitting straight up in bed with her arms lifted and an expression of ecstacy on her face, and something like a cry of joy on her lips. Then she fell back, and all was over. The incident, which was in every way striking and affecting, helped me to recall the conviction (set forth in my *Peak in Darien*), that the dying do, sometimes, catch a glimpse of blessed friends waiting for them on the threshold.]

"A little way off lies a woman dying in severest sufferings which have lasted long, and may yet last for weeks. Such part of her poor face as may be seen expresses almost angelic patience and submission, and the little she can say

is all of gratitude to God and man. On the box beside her bed there stands usually a cup with a few flowers, or even leaves or weeds—something to which, in the midst of that sickening disease, she can look for beauty. When we bring her flowers her pleasure is almost too affecting to witness. She says she remembers when she used to climb the hedge rows to gather them in the 'beautiful country.'"

Among the few ways open to us of relieving the miseries of these sick wards and of the parallel ones on the other side occupied by male sufferers, were the following:—The introduction of a few easy chairs with cushions for those who could sit by the fire in winter, and whose thinly-clothed frames could not bear the benches. Also bed-rests,—long knitted ones, fastened to the lower posts of the bed and passed behind the patient's back, so as to form a kind of sitting hammock,—very great comforts where there is only one small bolster or pillow and the patient wants to sit up in bed. Occasionally we gave little packets of good tea; workhouse tea at that time being almost too nauseous to drink We also brought pictures to hang on the walls. These we bought coloured and cheaply framed or varnished. Their effect upon the old women, especially pictures of children, was startling. One poor soul who had been lying opposite the same blank wall for twenty years, when I laid one of the coloured engravings on her bed preparatory to hanging it before her, actually *kissed* the face of the little child in the picture, and burst into tears.

Further, we brought a canary in a cage to hang in the window. This seems an odd gift, but it was so successful that I believe the good visitors who came after us have maintained a series of canaries ever since our time. The common interest excited by the bird brought friendliness and cheerfulness among the poor old souls, some of whom had kept up "a coolness" for years while living next to one another on their beds! The sleepless ones gloried in the summer-morning-song of Dicky,

and every poor visitor, daughter or grand-daughter, was sure to bring a handful of groundsel to the general rejoicing of Dicky's friends. Of course, we also brought flowers whenever we could contrive it; or a little summer fruit or winter apples.

Lastly, Books, magazines, and simple papers of various kinds; such as *Household Words*, *Chambers' Magazine*, &c. These were eagerly borrowed and exchanged, especially among the men. Nothing could be more dreary than the lives of those who were not actually suffering from any acute malady but were paralysed or otherwise disabled from work. I remember a ship-steward who had been struck with hemiplegia, and had spent the savings of his life time—no less than £800,—in futile efforts at cure. Another was a once-smart groom whom my friend exhorted to patience and thankfulness. "Yes, Ma'am," he replied promptly, "I will be *very* thankful,—when I get out!"

As an example of the kind of way in which every sort of wretchedness drains into a workhouse and of what need there is for someone to watch for it there, I may record how we one day perceived at the far end of a very large ward a figure not at all of the normal workhouse stamp,—an unmistakeable gentleman,—sitting on the side of his bed. With some diffidence we offered him the most recent and least childish of our literature. He accepted the papers graciously, and we learnt from the Master that the poor man had been found on the Downs a few days before with his throat cut; happily not irreparably. He had come from Australia to Europe to dispute some considerable property, and had lost both his lawsuit and the friendship of all his English relatives, and was starving, and totally unable to pay his passage back to his wife and children at the Antipodes. We got up a little subscription, and the good Freemasons, finding him to be a Brother, did the rest, and sent him home across the seas, rejoicing, and with his throat mended!

But the cases of the *incurable* poor weighed heavily on us, and as we studied it more, we came to see how exceedingly piteous is their destiny. We found that it is not an accidental misfortune, but a regular descent down the well-worn channels of Poverty, Disease and Death, for men and women to go to one or other of the 270 hospitals for *curable* patients which then existed in England (there must be many more now), and after a longer or shorter sojourn, to be pronounced "incurable," destined perhaps to linger for a year or several years, but to die inevitably from Consumption, Cancer or some other of the dreadful maladies which afflict human nature. What then becomes of them? Their homes, if they had any before going into the hospital, are almost sure to be too crowded to receive them back, or too poor to supply them with both support and nursing for months of helplessness. There is no resource for them but the workhouse, and there they sink down, hopeless and miserable; the hospital comforts of good beds and furniture and carefully prepared food and skilled nurses all lost, and only the hard workhouse bed to lie, and *die* upon. The burst of agony with which many a poor creature has told me: "I am sent here because I am incurable," remains one of the saddest of my memories.

Miss Elliot's keen and practical mind turned over the problem of how this misery could be in some degree alleviated. There was no use in trying to get sufficient Hospitals for Incurables opened to meet the want. There were only two at that time in England, and they received (as they do now) a rather different class from those with whom we are concerned; namely, the deformed and permanently diseased. At the lowest rate of £30 a year it would have needed £900,000 a year to house the 30,000 patients whom we should have wished to take from the workhouses The only possible plan was to improve their

condition *in* the workhouses; and this we fondly hoped might be done (without burdening the ratepayers) by our plan, which was as follows:—

That the incurables in workhouses should be avowedly distinguished from other paupers, and separate wards be allowed to them. That into those wards private charity be freely admitted and permitted to introduce, with the sanction of the medical officer, such comforts as would alleviate the sufferings of the inmates, *e.g.*, good spring beds, or air beds; easy-chairs, air-cushions, small refreshments such as good tea and lemons and oranges (often an immense boon to the sick); also snuff, cough lozenges, spectacles, flowers in the window, books and papers; and, above all, kindly visitors.

The plan was approved by a great many experienced men and women; and, as it would not have added a shilling anywhere to the rates, we were very hopeful that it might be generally adopted. Several pamphlets which we wrote, "*The Workhouse as a Hospital*," *Destitute Incurables*, and the "*Sick in Workhouses*," and "*Remarks on Incurables*," were widely circulated. The newspapers were very kind, and leaders or letters giving us a helping hand were inserted in nearly all, except the *Saturday Review*, which refused even one of its own regular contributors' requests to introduce the subject. I wrote an article called *Workhouse Sketches* for Macmillan's Magazine, dealing with the whole subject, and begged that it might be inserted gratuitously. To my delight the editor, Mr. Masson, wrote to me the following kind letter which I have kept among my pleasant souvenirs:—

"23, Henrietta Street,
"Covent Garden,
"February 18th, 1861.

"Dear Madam,

"As soon as possible in this part of the month, when there is much to do with the forthcoming number, I have

read your paper. Having an almost countless number of MSS. in hand, I greatly feared I might, though very reluctantly, be compelled to return it, but the reading of it has so convinced me of the great importance of arousing interest in the subject, and the paper itself is so touching, that I think I ought, with whatever difficulty, to find a place for it. . . . .

"In any case accept my best thanks for the opportunity of reading so admirable and powerful an experience; and allow me to express my regret that I had not the pleasure of meeting you at Mrs. Reid's.

"I am, dear Madam,

"Yours very truly,

"DAVID MASSON.

"Miss Frances Power Cobbe.

"Should you object to your name appearing in connexion with this paper? It is our usual practice."

The paper appeared and soon after, to my equal astonishment and delight, came a cheque for £14. It was the first money I had ever earned and when I had cashed the cheque I held the sovereigns in my hand and tossed them with a sense of pride and satisfaction which the gold of the Indies, if gained by inheritance, would not have given me! Naturally I went down straight to St. Peter's and gave the poor old souls such a tea as had not been known before in the memory of the "oldest inhabitant."

We also printed, and ourselves directed and posted circulars to the 666 Unions which then existed in England. We received a great many friendly letters in reply, and promises of help from Guardians in carrying out our plan. A certain number of Unions, I think 15, actually adopted it and set it going. We also induced the Social Science people, then very active and influential, to take it up, and papers on it were read at the Congresses in Glasgow and Dublin; the latter

by myself. The Hon. Sec. (then the young poetess Isa Craig) wrote to me as follows:

"National Association
"For the Promotion of Social Science,
"3, Waterloo Place, Pall Mall,
"28th December, 1860.

"Dear Miss Cobbe,

"The case of the poor 'incurables' is truly heartrending. I cried over the proof of your paper—a queer proceeding on the part of the Sub-editor of the Social Science Transactions, but I hope an earnest of the sympathy your noble appeal shall meet with wherever our volume goes, setting in action the roused sense of humanity and *justice* to remedy such bitter wrong and misery.

"Yours sincerely,

"Isa Craig."

A weightier testimony was that of the late Master of Balliol. The following letters from him on the subject are, I think, very characteristic and charming:—

"Coll. de Ball., Oxon.
"Hawhead, near Selkirk,
"Sept. 24th.

"Dear Miss Cobbe,

"I am very much obliged to you for sending me the extract from the newspaper which contains the plan for Destitute Incurables. I entirely agree in the object and greatly like the touching and simple manner in which you have described it.

"The only thing that occurs to me in passing is whether the system of outdoor relief to incurables should not also be extended? Many would still require to be received into the house (I do not wish in any degree to take away from the poor the obligation to support their Incurables outdoors, and it is, perhaps, better to trust to the natural human pity of a cottage than to the better attendance, warmth, &c.,

of a workhouse). But I daresay you are right in sticking to a simple point.

"All the world seems to be divided into Political Economists, Poor Law Commissioners, Guardians, Policemen, and Philanthropists, Enthusiasts, and Christian Socialists. Is there not a large intermediate ground which anyone who can write might occupy, and who could combine a real knowledge of the problems to be solved with the enthusiasm which impels a person to devote their life to solving them?

"The way would be to hide the philanthropy altogether as a weakness of the flesh; and sensible people would then be willing to listen.

"I entirely like the plan and wish it success. . . . .

"I am afraid that I am not likely to have an opportunity of making the scheme known. But if you have any other objects in which I can help you I shall think it a great pleasure to do so.

"Remember me most kindly to the Dean and his daughters. I thought they were not going to banish themselves to Cannes. Wherever they are I cannot easily forget them.

"I hope you enjoy Garibaldi's success. It is one of the very few public events that seem to make life happier.

"Believe me, with sincere respect,

"Yours truly,

"B. JOWETT."

"Coll. de Ball., Oxon.

"Dear Miss Cobbe,

"I write a line to thank you for the little pamphlet you have sent me which I read and like very much.

"There is no end of good that you may do by writing in that simple and touching style upon social questions.

"But don't go to war with Political Economy. 1st. Because the P. E.'s are a powerful and dangerous class.

2nd. Because it is impossible for ladies and gentlemen to fill up the interstices of legislation if they run counter to the common motives of self-interest. 3rd. (You won't agree to this) Because the P. E.'s have really done more for the labouring classes by their advocacy of free trade, &c., than all the Philanthropists put together.

"I wish that it were possible as a matter of taste to get rid of all philanthropic expressions, 'missions, &c.,' which are distasteful to the educated. But I suppose they are necessary for the Collection of Money. And no doubt as a matter of taste there is a good deal that might be corrected in the Political Economists.

"The light of the feelings never teaches the best way of dealing with the world *en masse* and the dry light never finds its way to the heart either of man or beast.

"You see I want all the humanities combined with Political Economy. Perhaps, it may be replied that such a combination is not possible in human nature.

"Excuse my speculations and believe me in haste,

"Yours very truly,

B. JOWETT."

About the same time that we began to visit the Bristol work house, Miss Louisa Twining bravely undertook a systematic reform of the whole system throughout the country. It was an enormous task, but she had great energy, and a fund of good sense; and with the support of Lord Mount-Temple (then Hon. William Cowper-Temple), Mrs. Tait, and several other excellent and influential persons, she carried out a grand reformation through the length and breadth of the land. Her *Workhouse Visiting Society*, and the monthly *Journal* she edited as its organ, brought by degrees good sense and good feeling quietly and unostentatiously to bear on the Boards of Guardians and their officials all over the country, and one abuse after another was disclosed, discussed, condemned. and finally, in most cases abolished. I went up

for a short visit to London at one time on purpose to learn all I could from *General* Twining (as I used to call her), and then returned to Bristol. I have been gratified to read in her charming *Recollections* published last year (1893), that in her well-qualified judgment Miss Elliot's work and mine was really the beginning of much that has subsequently been done for the sick and for workhouse girls. She says:

"In 1861* began the consideration of 'Destitute Incurables,' which was in its results to bring forth such a complete reform in the care of the sick in Workhouses, or at least I am surely justified in considering it one of the good seeds sown, which bought forth fruit in due season. One of the first to press the claims of these helpless ones on the notice of the public, who were, almost universally, utterly ignorant of their existence and their needs, was Frances Power Cobbe, who was then introduced to me; she lived near Bristol, and with her friend Miss Elliot, also of that place, had long visited the workhouse, and become acquainted with the inmates, helping more especially the school children, and befriending the girls after they went to service. This may be said to be one of the first beginnings of all those efforts now so largely developed by more than one society expressly for this object.

"I accompanied Miss Cobbe to the St. Giles's Schools and to the Strand, West London, and Holborn Unions, and to the Hospital for Incurables at Putney, in aid of her plans."—*Recollections*, p. 170.

While our plan for the Incurables was still in progress, I was obliged to spend a winter in Italy for my health, and on my way I went over the Hotel Dieu and the Salpêtrière in Paris, and several hospitals in Italy, to learn how best to treat this class of sufferers. I did not gain much. There were no arrangements that I noticed as better or more humane than

* Miss Elliot and I had begun it a year sooner, as stated above.

our own, and in many cases they seemed to be worse. In particular the proximity of infectious with other cases in the Hotel Dieu was a great evil. I was examining the bed of a poor victim of rheumatism when, on looking a few feet across the floor, I beheld the most awful case of small-pox which could be conceived. Both in Paris, Florence and the great San-Spirito Hospital in Rome, the nurses, who in those days all were Sisters of Charity, seemed to me very heartless; proud of their tidy cupboards full of lint and bandages, but very indifferent to their patients. Walking a little in advance of one of them in Florence, I came into a ward where a poor woman was lying in a bed behind the door, in the last "agony." A label at the foot of her bed bore the inscription "*Olio Santo*," showing that her condition had been observed—yet there was no friendly breast on which the poor creature's head could rest, no hand to wipe the deathsweats from her face. I called hastily to the Nun for help, but she replied with great coolness, "*Ci vuole del cotone*"! and seemed astonished when I used my own handkerchief. In San-Spirito the doctor who conducted me, and who was personally known to me, told me he would rather have our English pauper nurses than the Sisters. This, however, may have been a choice grounded on other reasons beside humanity to the patients. At the terrible hospital "degli Incurabili," in the via de' Greci, Rome, I saw fearful cases of disease (cancer, &c.), receiving so little comfort in the way of diet that the wretched creatures rose all down the wards, literally *screaming* to me for money to buy food, coffee, and so on. I asked the Sister, "Had they no lady visitors?" "O yes! there was the Princess So and so, and the Countess So and so, saintly ladies, who came once a week or once a month." "Then do they not provide the things these poor souls want?" "No, Signora, they don't do that." "Then, in

Heaven's name, what do they come to do for them?" It was some moments before I could be made to understand, "*Per pettinarle, Signora!*"—To comb their hair! The task was so disgusting that the great ladies came on purpose to perform it as a work of merit; for the good of their *own* souls!

The saddest sight which I ever beheld, however, I think was not in these Italian hospitals but in the Salpêtrière in Paris. As I was going round the wards with a Sister, I noticed on a bed opposite us a very handsome woman lying with her head a little raised and her marble neck somewhat exposed, while her arms lay rigidly on each side out of the bed-clothes. "What is the matter with that patient?" I asked. Before the Nun could tell me that, (except in her head,) she was completely paralyzed, there came in response to me an unearthly, inarticulate cry like that of an animal in agony; and I understood that the hapless creature was trying to call me. I went and stood over her and her eyes burnt into mine with the hungry eagerness of a woman famishing for sympathy and comfort in her awful affliction. She was a *living statue;* unable even to speak, much less to move hand or foot; yet still young; not over thirty I should think, and likely to live for years on that bed! The horror of her fate and the piteousness of the appeal in her eyes, and her inarticulate moans and cries, completely broke me down. I poured out all I could think of to say to comfort her, of prayer and patience and eternal hope; and at last was releasing her hand which I had been holding, and on which my tears had been falling fast,—when I felt a thrill run down her poor stiffened arm. It was the uttermost efforts she could make, striving with all her might to return my pressure.

In recent years I have heard of "scientific experiments" conducted by the late Dr. Charcot and a coterie of medical

men, upon the patients of the Salpêtrière. When I have read of these, I have thought of that paralyzed woman with dread lest she might be yet alive to suffer; and with indignation against the Science which counts cases like these of uttermost human affliction, "interesting" subjects for investigation!

Some years after this time, hearing of the great Asylum designed by Mr. Holloway, I made an effort to bring influence from many quarters to bear on him to induce him to change its destination at that early stage, and make it the much-needed Home for Incurables. Many ladies and gentlemen whose names I hoped would carry weight with him, were kindly willing to write to him on the subject. Among them was the Hon. Mrs. Monsell, then Lady Superior of Clewer. Her letter to me on the subject was so wise that I have preserved it. Mr. Holloway however was inexorable. Would to Heaven that some other millionaire, instead of spending tens of thousands on Palaces of Delight and places of public amusement, would take to heart the case of those most wretched of human beings, the Destitute Incurables, who are still sent every year by thousands to die in the workhouses of England and Ireland with scarcely one of the comforts which their miserable condition demands.

"House of Mercy,
"Clewer,
"Windsor.

"Madam,

"I have read your letter with much interest, and have at once forwarded it to Mrs. Wellesley, asking her to show it to Princess Christian, and also to speak to Mrs. Gladstone.

"I have no doubt that a large sum of money would be better expended on an *Incurable* than on a *Convalescent* Hospital. It would be wiser not to congregate so many Convalescents. For *Incurables*, under good management

and liberal Christian teaching, it would not signify how many were gathered together, provided the space were large enough for the work.

"By 'liberal Christian teaching' I mean, that, while I presume Mr. Holloway would make it a Church of England Institution, Roman Catholics ought to have the comfort of free access from their own teachers.

"An Incurable Hospital without the religious element fairly represented, and the blessing which Religion brings to each individually, would be a miserable desolation. But there should be the most entire freedom of conscience allowed to each, in what, if that great sum were expended, must become a National Institution.

"I earnestly hope Mr. Holloway will take the subject of the needs of Incurables into consideration. In our own Hospital, at St. Andrew's, and St. Raphael's, Torquay, we shrink from turning out our dying cases, and yet it does not do to let them die in the wards with convalescent patients. Few can estimate the misery of the incurable cases; and the expense connected with the nursing is so great, it is not easy for private benevolence to provide Incurable Hospitals on a small scale. Besides, they need room for classification. The truth is, an Incurable Hospital is a far more difficult machine to work than a Convalescent; and so the work, if well done, would be far nobler.

"Believe me, Madam,

"Yours faithfully,

"H. MONSELL.

"June 23rd, 1874."

In concluding these observations generally on the *Sick in Workhouses* I should like to offer to humane visitors one definite result of my own experience. "Do not imagine that what will best cheer the poor souls will be *your* conversation, however well designed to entertain or instruct them. That which will really brighten their dreary lives is, to be *made to*

*talk themselves*, and to enjoy the privilege of a good listener. Draw them out about their old homes in 'the beautiful country,' as they always call it; or in whatever town sheltered them in childhood. Ask about their fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, everything connected with their early lives, and tell them if possible any late news about the place and people connected therewith by ever so slight a thread. But before all things make THEM talk; and show yourself interested in what they say."

# CHAPTER XII.

## *BRISTOL.*

### *WORKHOUSE GIRLS.*

## CHAPTER XII.

### Workhouse Girls, Bristol.

Beside the poor sick and aged people in the Workhouse, the attention of Miss Elliot and myself was much drawn to the girls who were sent out from thence to service on attaining (about) their sixteenth year. On all hands, and notably from Miss Twining and from some excellent Irish philanthropists, we heard the most deplorable reports of the incompetence of the poor children to perform the simplest duties of domestic life, and their consequent dismissal from one place after another till they ended in ruin. It was stated at the time (1862), on good authority, that, on tracing the subsequent history of 80 girls who had been brought up in a single London Workhouse, *every one* was found to be on the streets! In short these hapless "children of the State," as my friend Miss Florence Davenport Hill most properly named them, seemed at that time as if they were being trained on purpose to fall into a life of sin; having nothing to keep them out of it,—no friends, no affections, no homes, no training for any kind of useful labour, no habits of self-control or self-guidance.

It was never realized by the *men* (who, in those days, alone managed our pauper system) that girls cannot be trained *en masse* to be general servants, nurses, cooks, or anything else. The strict routine, the vast half-furnished wards, the huge utensils and furnaces of a large workhouse, have too little in common with the ways of family life and the furniture of a common kitchen, to furnish any sort of practising ground for household service. The Report of the Royal Commission on

Education, issued about that time, concluded that Workhouse Schools leave the pauper taint on the children, *but* "that District and separate schools give an education to the children contained in them which effectually tends to emancipate them from pauperism." Accordingly, the vast District schools, containing each the children from many Unions, was then in full blast, and the girls were taught extremely well to read, write and cipher; but were neither taught to cook for any ordinary household, or to scour, or sweep, or nurse, or serve the humblest table. What was far more deplorable, they were not, and could not be, taught to love or trust any human being, since no one loved or cared for them; or to exercise even so much self-control as should help them to forbear from stealing lumps of sugar out of the first bowl left in their way. "But," we may be told, "they received excellent religious instruction?" Let any one try to realize the idea of God which any child can possibly reach *who has never been loved;* and he will then perhaps rightly estimate the value of such "religious instruction" in a dreary pauper school. I have never quite seen the force of the argument "If a man love not his neighbour whom he hath seen, how shall he love God whom he hath not seen?" But the converse is very clear. "If a man *hath not been beloved* by his neighbour or his parents, how shall he believe in the Love of the invisible God?" Religion is a plant which grows and flourishes in an atmosphere of a certain degree of warmth and softness, but not in the Frozen Zone of lovelessness, wherein is no sweetness, no beauty, no tenderness.

How to prevent the girls who left Bristol workhouse from falling into the same gulf as the unhappy ones in London, occupied very much the thoughts of Miss Elliot and her sister (afterwards Mrs. Montague Blackett) and myself, in 1859 and 1860-61. Our friend, Miss Sarah Stephen (daughter

of Serjeant Stephen, niece of Sir James), then residing in Clifton, had for some time been working successfully a Preventive Mission for the poorer class of girls in Bristol; with a good motherly old woman as her agent to look after them. This naturally helped us to an idea which developed itself into the following plan—

Miss Elliot and her sister, as I have said, resided at that time with their father at the old Bristol Deanery, close to the Cathedral in College Green. This house was known to everyone in the city, which was a great advantage at starting. A Sunday afternoon School for workhouse girls only, was opened by the two kind and wise sisters; and soon frequented by a happy little class. The first step in each case (which eventually fell chiefly to my share of the business) was to receive notice from the Workhouse of the address of every girl when sent out to her first service, and thereupon to go at once and call on her new mistress, and ask her permission for the little servant's attendance at the Deanery Class. As Miss Elliot wrote most truly, in speaking of the need of haste in this preliminary visit—

> "There are few times in a girl's life when kindness is more valued by her, or more necessary to her, than when she is taken from the shelter and routine of school life and plunged suddenly and alone into a new struggling world full of temptations and trials. That this is the turning point in the life of many I feel confident, and I think delay in beginning friendly intercourse most dangerous; they, like other human beings, will seek friends of some kind. We found them very ready to take good ones if the chance were offered, and, as it seemed, grateful for such chance. But good friends failing them, they will most assuredly find bad ones."—(*Workhouse Girls. Notes by M. Elliot*, p. 7.)

As a rule the mistresses, who were all of the humbler sort and of course persons of good reputation, seemed to welcome

my rather intrusive visit and questions, which were, of course, made with every possible courtesy. A little by-play about the insufficient outfit given by the Workhouse, and an offer of small additional adornments for Sundays, was generally well received; and the happy fact of having such an ostensibly and unmistakeably respectable address for the Sunday school, secured many assents which might otherwise have been denied. The mistresses were generally in a state of chronic vexation at their little servants' stupidity and incompetence; and on this head I could produce great effect by inveighing against the useless Workhouse education. There was often difficulty in getting leave of absence for the girls on Sunday afternoon, but with the patience and good humour of the teachers (who gave their lessons to as many or as few as came to them), there was always something of a class, and the poor girls themselves were most eager to lose no chance of attending.

A little reading of *Pilgrims Progress* and other good books; more explanations and talk; much hymn singing and repeating of hymns learned during the week; and a penny banking account,—such were some of the devices of the kind teachers to reach the hearts of their little pupils. And very effectually they did so, as the 30 letters which they wrote between them to Miss Elliot when she, or they, left Bristol, amply testified. Here is one of these epistles; surely a model of prudence and candour on the occasion of the approaching marriage of the writer! The back-handed compliment to the looks of her betrothed is specially delightful.

"You pointed out one thing in your kind letter, that to be sure that the young man was steady. I have been with him now two years, and I hope I know his failings; and I can say I have never known any one so steady and trustworthy as he is. I might have bettered myself as regards

the outside looks; but, dear Madam, I think of the future, and what my home would be then; and perhaps if I married a gay man, I should always be unhappy. But John has a kind heart, and all he thinks of is to make others happy; and I hope I shall never have a cause to regret my choice, and I will try and do my best to do my duty, so that one day you may see me comfortable. Dear Madam, I cannot thank you enough for your kindness to me."

The whole experiment was marvellously successful. Nearly all the poor children seemed to have been improved in various ways as well as certainly made happier by their Sundays at the Deanery, and not one of them, I believe, turned out ill afterwards or fell into any serious trouble. Many of them married respectably. In short it proved to be a good plan, which we have had no hesitation in recommending ever since. Eventually it was taken up by humane ladies in London, and there it slowly developed into the now imposing society with the long name (commonly abbreviated into M.A.B.Y.S.) the *Metropolitan Association for Befriending Young Servants*. Two or three years ago when I attended and spoke at the annual meeting of this large body, with the Lord Mayor of London in the chair and a Bishop to address us, it seemed very astonishing and delightful to Miss Elliot and me that our small beginnings of thirty years before should have swelled to such an assembly!

My experience of the wrongs and perils of young servant girls, acquired during my work *as Whipper-in* to the Deanery class, remains a painful memory, and supplies strong arguments in favour of extending some such protection to such girls generally. Some cases of oppression and injustice on the part of mistresses (themselves, no doubt, poor and overstrained, and not unnaturally exasperated by their poor little slave's incompetence) were very cruel. I heard of one case which had occurred

just before we began our work, wherein the girl had been left in charge of a small shop. A man came in out of the street, and seeing only this helpless child of fifteen behind the counter, laid hands on something (worth sixpence as it proved) and walked off with it without payment. When the mistress returned the girl told her what had happened, whereupon she and her husband stormed and scolded; and eventually *turned the girl out of the house!* This was at nine o'clock at night, in one of the lowest parts of Bristol, and the unhappy girl had not a shilling in her possession. A murder would scarcely have been more wicked.

Sometimes the mistresses sent their servants away without paying them any wages at all, making up their accounts in a style like this: "I owe you five and sixpence; but you broke my teapot, which was worth three shillings; and you burnt a tablecover worth two, and broke two plates and a saucer, and lost a spoon, and I gave you an old pair of boots, worth at least eighteen pence, so *you owe me* half-a-crown; and if you don't go away quietly I'll call the police and give you in charge!" The mere name of the police would inevitably terrify the poor little drudge into submission to her oppressor. That the law could ever *defend* and not punish her would be quite outside her comprehension.

The wretched holes under stairs, or in cellars, or garrets, where these girls were made to sleep, were often most unhealthy; and their exposure to cold, with only the thin workhouse cotton frock, leaving arms and neck bare, was cruel in winter. One day I had an example of this, not easily to be forgotten. I had just received notice that a girl of sixteen had been sent from the workhouse (Bristol or Clifton, I forget which) to a place in St. Philip's, at the far end of Bristol. It was a snowy day but I walked to the place with the same odd conviction over me of which I have spoken, that I was bound to go at *once*. When I reached

the house, I found it was one a little above the usual class for workhouse-girl servants and had an area. The snow was falling fast, and as I knocked I looked down into the area and saw a girl in her cotton dress standing out at a wash-tub;—head, neck and arms all bare, and the snow falling on them with the bitter wind eddying through the area. Presently the door was opened and there stood the girl, in such a condition of bronchitis as I hardly ever saw in my life. When the mistress appeared I told her civilly that I was very sorry, but that the girl was in mortal danger of inflammation of the lungs and *must* be put to bed immediately. "O, that was entirely out of the question." "But it *must* be done," I said. Eventually after much angry altercation, the woman consented to my fetching a fly, putting the girl into it, driving with her to the Infirmary (for which I had always tickets) and leaving her there in charge of a friendly doctor. Next day when I called to enquire, he told me she could scarcely have lived after another hour of exposure, and that she could recover only by the most stringent and immediate treatment. It was another instance of the verification of my superstition.

Of course we tried to draw attention generally to the need for some supervision of the poor Workhouse girls throughout the country. I wrote and read at a Social Science Congress a paper on "*Friendless Girls and How to Help them*," giving a full account of Miss Stephen's admirable *Preventive Mission;* and this I had reason to hope, aroused some interest. Several years later Miss Elliot wrote a charming little book with full details about her girls and their letters; "*Workhouse Girls; Notes of an attempt to help them*," published by Nisbet. Also we managed to get numerous articles and letters into newspapers touching on Workhouse abuses and needs generally. Miss Elliot having many

influential friends was able to do a great deal in the way of getting our ideas put before the public. I used to write my papers after coming home in the evening and often late into the night. Sometimes, when I was very anxious that something should go off by the early morning mail, I got out of the side window of my sitting-room at two or three o'clock and walked the half-mile to the solitary post-office near the *Black Boy* (Pillar posts were undreamed of in those days), and then climbed in at the window again, to sleep soundly!

Some years afterwards I wrote in *Fraser's Magazine* and later again republished in my *Studies: Ethical and Social*, a somewhat elaborate article on *the Philosophy of the Poor Laws* as I had come to understand it after my experience at Bristol. This paper was so fortunate as to fall in the way of an Australian philanthropic gentleman, President of a Royal Commission to enquire into the question of Pauper legislation in New South Wales. He, (Mr. Windeyer,) approved of several of my suggestions and recommended them in the Report of his Commission, and eventually procured their embodiment in the laws of the Colony.

The following is one of several letters which I received from him on the subject.

"Chambers,
"Sydney,
"June 6th, 1874.

"My Dear Madam,

"Though personally unknown to you I take the liberty as a warm admirer of your writings, to which I owe so much both of intellectual entertainment and profoundest spiritual comfort, to send you herewith a copy of a Report upon the Public Charities of New South Wales, brought up by a Royal Commission of which I was the President. I may add that the document was written by me; and that my

brother Commissioners did me the honour of adopting it without any alteration. As the views to which I have endeavoured to give expression have been so eloquently advocated by you, I have ventured to hope that my attempt to give practical expression to them in this Colony may not be without interest to you, as the first effort made in this young country to promulgate sounder and more philosophic views as to the training of pauper children.

"In your large heart the feeling *Homo sum* will, I think, make room for some kindly sympathy with those who, far off, in a small provincial way, try to rouse the attention and direct the energies of men for the benefit of their kind, and if any good comes of this bit of work, I should like you to know how much I have been sustained amidst much of the opposition which all new ideas encounter, by the convictions which you have so materially aided in building up and confirming. If you care to look further into our inquiry I shall be sending a copy of the evidence to the Misses Hill, whose acquaintance I had the great pleasure of making on their visit to this country and they doubtless would show it to you if caring to see it, but I have not presumed to bore you with anything further than the Report.

"Believe me, your faithful servant,

"WILL. C. WINDEYER."

I have since learned with great pleasure from an official Report sent from Australia to a Congress held during the World's Fair of 1893 at Chicago, that the arrangement has been found perfectly successful, and has been permanently adopted in the Colony.

While earnestly advocating some such friendly care and guardianship of these Workhouse Girls as I have described, I would nevertheless enter here my serious protest against the excessive lengths to which one Society in particular—devoted to the welfare of the humbler class of girls generally—has

gone of late years in the matter of incessant pleasure-parties for them. I do not think that encouragement to (what is to them) dissipation, conduces to their real welfare or happiness. It is always only too easy for all of us to remove the centre of our interest from the *Business* of life to its *Pleasures*. The moment this is done, whether in the case of poor persons or rich, Duty becomes a weariness. Success in our proper work is no longer an object of ambition, and the hours necessarily occupied by it are grudged and curtailed. Amusement usurps the foreground, instead of being kept in the background, of thought. This is the kind of moral *dislocation* which is even now destroying, in the higher ranks, much of the duty-loving character bequeathed to our Anglo-Saxon race by our Puritan fathers. Ladies and gentlemen do not indeed now "live to eat" like the old epicures, but they live to shoot, to hunt, to play tennis or golf; to give and attend parties of one sort or another; and the result, I think, is to a great degree traceable in the prevailing Pessimism. But bad as excessive Pleasure-seeking and Duty-neglecting is for those who are not compelled to earn their bread, it is absolutely fatal to those who must needs do so. The temptations which lie in the way of a young servant who has acquired a distaste for honest work and a passion for pleasure, require no words of mine to set forth in their terrible colours. Even too much and too exciting *reading*, and endless letter-writing may render wholesome toil obnoxious. A good maid I once possessed simply observed to me (on hearing that a friend's servant had read twenty volumes in a fortnight and neglected meanwhile to mend her mistress's clothes), "I never knew anyone who was so fond of books who did not *hate her work*"! It is surely no kindness to train people to hate the means by which they can honourably support themselves, and which might, in itself, be interesting and pleasant to them. But incessant tea-parties and concerts and excursions

are much more calculated to distract and dissipate the minds of girls than even the most exciting story books, and the good folks who would be shocked to supply them with an unintermittent series of novels, do not see the mischief of encouraging the perpetual entertainments now in vogue all over the country. Let us make the girls, first *safe;* then as *happy* as we can. But it is an error to imagine that over-indulgence in dissipation,—even in the shape of the most respectable tea-parties and excursions,—is the way to make them either safe or happy.

The following is an account which Miss Florence D. Hill has kindly written for me, of the details of her own work on behalf of pauper children which dovetailed with ours for Workhouse girls :—

"March 27th, 1894.

"I well remember the deep interest with which I learnt from your own lips the simple but effective plan by which you and Miss Elliot and her sister befriended the elder girls from Bristol Workhouse, and heard you read your paper, "*Friendless Girls, and How to Help Them,*" at the meeting of the British Association in Dublin in 1861. Gradually another benevolent scheme was coming into effect, which not only bestows friends but a home and family affections on the forlorn pauper child, taking it in hand from infancy. The reference in your "*Philosophy of the Poor Laws*" to Mr. Greig's Report on Boarding-out as pursued for many years at Edinburgh, caused my cousin, Miss Clark, to make the experiment in South Australia, which has developed into a noble system for dealing under natural conditions with all destitute and erring children in the great Colonies of the South Seas. Meanwhile, at home the evidence of success attained by Mrs. Archer in Wiltshire and her disciples elsewhere, and by other independent workers, in placing orphan and deserted children in the care of foster parents, enabled the late

Dr. Goodeve, *ex-officio* Guardian for Clifton, to obtain the adoption of the plan by his Board; his wife becoming President of one of the very first Committees formed to find suitable homes and supervise the children.

"Your suggestion to me long before to become a visitor at Clifton Workhouse turned my thoughts to Poor-Law administration, and especially enlisted my sympathy for those whom you touchingly named 'Children of the State.' One consequence has been the study of the different methods pursued at home and abroad for their up-bringing; and though much that is praiseworthy may exist in the rest, I am convinced that in Boarding-out (whose adoption among us connects itself closely in my mind with you) are found the circumstances on which we may confidently rely to yield the larger measure of success as affording the nearest approach yet discovered to the lot appointed by God for the healthful growth of body, mind and soul. This plan endows the poor little waif with the love of father and mother, the companionship of brothers and sisters, and his share in the varied joys and sorrows, duties and advantages which spring from community with them, creating that bond—strong to endure adversity, to purify success—woven from the common events of home-life even before memory can note. The abandoned child enters an honourable family, develops into the respectable citizen, and becomes a useful member of the body politic."

# CHAPTER XIII.

## *BRISTOL.*

### *FRIENDS.*

## CHAPTER XIII.

### Friends in Bristol.

*What is Chance?* How often does that question recur in the course of every history, small or great? My whole course of life was deflected by the mishap of stepping a little awry out of a train at Bath, and miscalculating the height of the platform, which is there unusually low. I had gone to spend a day with a friend, and on my way back to Bristol I thus sprained my ankle. I was at that time forty years of age (a date I now alas! regard as quite the prime of life!), and in splendid health and spirits, fully intending to continue for the rest of my days labouring on the same lines as prospects of usefulness might open. I remember feeling the delight of walking over the springy sward of the Downs and laughing as I said to myself "I do believe I could walk down anybody and perhaps *talk* down anybody too!" The next week I was a poor cripple on crutches, never to take a step without them for four long years, during which period I grew practically into an old woman, and (unhappily for me) into a very large and heavy one, for want of the exercise to which I had been accustomed. The morning after my mishap, finding my ankle much swollen and being in a great hurry to go on with my work, I sent for one of the principal surgeons in Bristol, who bound the limb so tightly that the circulation (always rather feeble) was impeded, and every sort of distressful condition supervened. Of course the surgeon threw the blame on me for attempting to use the leg; but it was very little I *could* do in this way even if I had tried, without excessive pain; and, after a few weeks, I went to London in the full confidence that I had only to bespeak "the best advice" to

be speedily cured. I did get what all the world would still consider the "best advice;" but bad was that best. Guineas I could ill spare ran away like water while the great surgeon came and went, doing me no good at all; the evil conditions growing worse daily. I returned back from London and spent some wretched months at Clifton. An artery, I believe, was stopped, and there was danger of inflammation of the joint. At last with infinite regret I gave up the hope of ever recovering such activity as would permit me to carry on my work either in the schools or workhouse. No one who has not known the miseries of lameness, the perpetual contention with ignoble difficulties which it involves, can judge how hard a trial it is to an active mind to become a cripple.

Still believing in my simplicity that great surgeons might remedy every evil, I went again to London to consult the most eminent, and by the mistake of a friend, it chanced that I summoned two very great personages on the same day, though, fortunately, at different hours. The case was, of course, of the simplest; but the two gentlemen gave me precisely opposite advice. *One* sent me abroad to certain baths, which proved to be the wrong ones for my trouble, and gave me a letter to his friend there, a certain Baron. The moment the Baron-Doctor saw my foot he exclaimed that it ought never to have been allowed to get into the state of swollen veins and arrested circulation in which he found it; astringents and all sorts of measures ought to have been applied. In truth I was in a most miserable condition, for I could not drop the limb for two minutes without the blood running into it till it became like an ink-bottle, when, if I held it up, it became as white as if dead. And all this had been getting worse and worse while I was consulting ten doctors in succession, and chiefly the most eminent in England! The Baron-Doctor first told me that the waters *would* bring out the gout, and then, when I objected, assured me they should

*not* bring it out; after which I relinquished the privilege of his visits and he charged me for an entire course of treatment.

The *second* great London surgeon told me *not* to go abroad, but to have a gutta-percha boot made for my leg to keep it stiff. I had the boot made, (with much distress and expense), took it abroad in my trunk, and asked the successor of the Baron-Doctor (who could make the waters give the gout or not as he pleased), "Whether he advised me to wear the wonderful machine?" The good old Frenchman, who was also Mayor of his town, and who did me more good than anybody else, replied cautiously, "If you wish, Madame, to be lame for life you will wear that boot. A great many English come to us here to be unstiffened after having had their joints stiffened by English surgeons' devices of this sort, but we can do nothing for them. A joint once thoroughly stiff can never be restored." It may be guessed that the expensive boot was quietly deposited on the nearest heap of rubbish.

After that experience I tried the baths in Savoy and others in Italy. But my lameness seemed permanent. A great Italian Doctor could think of nothing better than to put a few walnut-leaves on my ankle—a process which might perhaps have effected something in fifty years! Only the good and great Nélaton, whom I consulted in Paris, told me he believed I should recover some time; but he could not tell me anything to do to hasten the event. Returned to London I sent for Sir William Fergusson, and that honest man on hearing my story said simply: "And if you had gone to nobody and not bandaged your ankle, but merely bathed it, you would have been well in three weeks." Thus I learned from the best authority, that I had paid for the folly of consulting an eminent surgeon for a common sprain, by four years of miserable helplessness and by the breaking up of my whole plan of life.

I must conclude this dismal record by one last trait of medical character. I had determined, after seeing Fergusson, to consult no other doctor; indeed I could ill afford to do so. But a friend conveyed to me a message from a London surgeon of repute (since dead) that he would like to be allowed to treat me gratuitously; having felt much interest in my books. I was simple enough to fall into the trap and to feel grateful for his offer; and I paid him several visits, during which he chatted pleasantly, and once did some trifling thing to relieve my foot. One day I wrote and asked him kindly to advise me by letter about some directions he had given me; whereupon he answered tartly that he "could not correspond; and that I must always attend at his house." The suspicion dawned on me, and soon reached conviction, that what he wanted was not so much to cure *me*, as to swell the scanty show of patients in his waiting-room! Of course after this, I speedily retreated; offering many thanks and some small, and as I hoped, acceptable *souvenir* with inscription to lie on his table. But when I thought this had concluded my relations with Mr.——, I found I had reckoned without my —*doctor!* One after another he wrote to me three or four peremptory notes requesting me to send him introductions for himself or his family, to influential friends of mine rather out of his sphere. I would rather have paid him fifty fees than have felt bound to give these introductions.

Finally I ceased to do anything whatever to my unfortunate ankle, except what most of my advisers had forbidden, namely, to walk upon it,—and a year or two afterwards I climbed Cader Idris; walking quietly with my friend to the summit. Sitting there, on the Giants' Chair we passed an unanimous resolution. It was: "*Hang the Doctors!*"

I must now set down a few recollections of the many friends and interesting acquaintances whom I met at Bristol. In the first place I may say briefly that all Miss Carpenter's

friends (mostly Unitarians) were very kind to me, and that though I did not go out to any sort of entertainment while I lived with her, it was not for lack of hospitable invitations.

The family next to that of the Dean with which I became closely acquainted and to which I owed most, was that of Matthew Davenport Hill, the Recorder of Birmingham, whose labours (summed up in his own *Repression of Crime* and in his *Biography* by his daughters) did more, I believe, than those of any other philanthropist beside Mary Carpenter, to improve the treatment of both adult and juvenile crime in England. I am not competent to offer judgment on the many questions of jurisprudence with which he dealt, but I can well testify to the exceeding goodness of his large heart, the massiveness of his grasp of his subjects, and (never-to-be-forgotten) his most delightful humour. He was a man who from unlucky chances never attained a position commensurate with his abilities and his worth, but who was beloved and admired in no ordinary degree by all who came near him. His family of sons and daughters formed a centre of usefulness in the neighbourhood of Bristol as they have since done in London, where Miss Hill is, I believe, now the senior member of the School Board, while her sister, Miss Florence Davenport Hill, has been equally active as a Poor Law Guardian, and most especially as the originator of the great and far-reaching reform in the management of pauper orphans, known as the system of Boarding Out, of which I have spoken in the last chapter. I must not indulge myself by writing at too great length of such friends, but will insert here a few notes I made of Recorder Hill's wonderfully interesting conversation during a Christmas visit I paid to him at Heath House.

"Dec. 26th. I spent yesterday and last night with my kind friends the Hills at Heath House. In the evening I drew out the Recorder to speak of questions of evidence, and he told me many remarkable anecdotes in his own

practice at the Bar, of doubtful identity, &c. On one occasion a case was tried three times; and he observed how the *certainty* of the witnesses, the clearness of details, and unhesitating asseveration of facts which at first had been doubtfully stated, *grew* in each trial. He said 'the most dangerous of all witnesses are those who *honestly* give *false* witness—a most numerous class.'

"To-day he invited me to walk with him on his terrace and up and down the approach. The snow lay thick on the grass, but the sun shone bright, and I walked for more than an hour and a-half beside the dear old man. He told me how he had by degrees learned to distrust all ideas of Retribution, and to believe in the 'aggressive power of love and kindness,' (a phrase Lady Byron had liked); and how at last it struck him that all this was in the new Testament; and that few, except religious Christians, ever aided the great causes of philanthropy. I said, it was quite true, Christ had revealed that religion of love; and that there were unhappily very few who, having intellectually doubted the Christian creed, pressed on further to any clear or fervent religion beyond; but that without religion, *i.e.*, love of God, I hardly believed it possible to work for man. He said he had known nearly all the eminent men of his time in every line, and had somehow got close to them, and had never found one of them really believe Christianity. I said, 'No; no strong intellect of our day could do so, altogether; but that I thought it was faithless in us to doubt that if we pushed bravely on to whatever seemed *truth* we should there find all the more reason to love God and man, and never lose any *real* good of Christianity.' He agreed, but said, 'You are a watchmaker, I am a weaver; this is your work, I have a different one,—and I cannot afford to part with the Evangelicals, who are my best helpers. Thus though I wholly disagree with them about Sunday I never publish my difference.' I said I felt the great danger of pushing uneducated people beyond the bounds of an authoritative creed, and for my own part would think it

safest that Jowett's views should prevail for a generation, preparatory to Theism.

"Then we spoke of Immortality, and he expressed himself nobly on the thought that all our differences of rich and poor, wise or ignorant, are lost in comparison of that one fact of our common Immortality. As he said, he felt that waiting a moment jostled in a crowd at a railway station, was a larger point in comparison of his whole life than this life is, to the future. We joined in condemning Emerson and George Elliot's ideas of the 'little value' of ordinary souls. His burst of indignation at her phrase '*Guano races of men*' was very fine. He said, talking of Reformatories, 'A century hence,—in 1960,—some people will walk this terrace and talk of the great improvement of the new asylums where hopeless criminals and vicious persons will be permanently consigned. They will not be formally condemned for life, but we shall all know that they will never fulfil the conditions of their release. They will not be made unhappy, but forced to work and kept under strong control; the happiest state for them.'"

Here is a very flattering letter from Mr. Hill written a few years later, on receipt of a copy of my *Italics*:—

"The Hawthorns,
"Edgbaston, Birmingham,
"25th Oct., 1864.

"My dear Miss Cobbe,

"Although I am kept out of court to-day at the instance of my physician, who threatens me with bronchitis if I do not keep house, yet it has been a day not devoid of much enjoyment. Your charming book which, alas, I have nearly finished, is carrying me through it only too rapidly. What a harvest of observation, thought, reading, and discourse have you brought home from Italy! But I am too much overwhelmed with it to talk much about it, especially in the obfuscated state of my intellect to which I am just now reduced. But I must just tell you how I am amused in

midst of my admiration, with your humility as regards your sex; said humility being a cloak which, opening a little at one page, discloses a rich garment of pride underneath (*vide* page 438 towards the bottom). I say no more, only as I don't mean to give up the follies of youth for the next eight years, that is until I am eighty, I don't choose to be called 'venerable.' One might as well consent to become an Archdeacon at once!

"Your portraits are delightful, some of the originals I know, and the likeness is good, but alas, idealized!

"To call your book a 'trifling' work is just as absurd as to call me 'venerable.' It deals nobly, fearlessly, and I will add in many parts *profoundly*, with the greatest questions that can employ human intellect or touch the human heart, and although I do not always agree with you, I always respect your opinions and learn from the arguments by which they are supported. But certainly in the vast majority of instances I do agree with you, and more than agree, which is a cold, unimpressive term.

"Most truly yours,

"M. D. HILL."

"Heath House, Stapleton, Bristol,

"17th August, 1871.

"My dear Miss Cobbe,

"That is to say falsest of woman-kind! You have cruelly jilted me. Florry wrote to say you were coming here as you ought to have done long ago. Well, as your countryman, Ossian, or his double, Macpherson, says, 'Age is dark and unlovely,' and therefore the rival of the American Giantess turns a broad back upon me. I must submit to my fall. . . .

"Though I take in the *Echo*, I have not lately seen any article which I could confidently attribute to your pen.

"I have, however, been much gratified with your article on *The Devil*, the only writing I ever read on the origin of evil which did not appear to me absolutely contemptible. Talking of these matters, Coleridge said to Thelwall (*ex*

*relatione* Thelwall), 'God has all the power that *is*, but there is no power over a contradiction expressed or implied.' Your suggestion that the existence of evil is due to contradiction, is, I have no doubt, very just, but my stupid head is this morning quite unable to put on paper what is foggily floating in my mind, and so I leave it.

"I spent a good part of yesterday morning in reading the *Westminster Review* of Walt Whitman's works, which quite laid hold of me.

"Most truly yours,

"M. D. HILL."

Another interesting person who I first came to know at Bristol, (where he visited at the Deanery and at Dr. Symonds' house,) was the late Master of Balliol. I have already cited some kind letters from him referring to our plans for Incurables and Workhouse Girls. I will be vain enough to quote here, with the permission of the friend to whom they were addressed, some of his remarks about my *Intuitive Morals* and *Broken Lights;* and also his opinion of Theodore Parker, which will interest many readers:—

"From Rev. Benjamin Jowett.

"January 22nd, 1861.

"I heard of your friend Miss Cobbe the other day at Fulham. . . . . Pray urge her to go on with her books and try to make them more interesting. (This can only be done by throwing more feeling into them and adapting them more to what other people are thinking and feeling about.) I am not speaking of changing her ideas, but the mode of expressing them. The great labour of writing is adapting what you say to others. She has great ability, and there is something really fine and striking in her views of things, so that it is worth while she should consider the form of her writings." . . . .

"April 16th, 1861.

"Let me pass to a more interesting subject—Miss Cobbe. Since I wrote to you last I have read the greater part of

her book" (*Intuitive Morals*) "which I quite agree with you in thinking full of interest. It shows great power and knowledge of the subject, yet I should fear it would be hardly intelligible to anyone who had not been nourished at some time of their lives on the philosophy of Kant; and also she seems to me to be too exclusive and antagonistic towards other systems—*e.g.*, the Utilitarian. All systems of Philosophy have their place and use, and lay hold on some minds, and therefore though they are not all equally true, it is no use to rail at Bentham and the Utilitarians after the manner of *Blackwoods' Magazine*. Perhaps, however, Miss Cobbe would retort on me that her attacks on the Utilitarians have their place and their use too; only they were not meant for people who 'revel in Scepticism' like me (the *Saturday Review* says, is it not very Irish of them to say so?). Pray exhort her to write (for it is really worth while) and not to spend her money and time wholly in schemes of philanthropy. For a woman of her ability, writing offers a great field, better in many respects than practical life."

"October 10th, 1861.

"A day or two ago I was at Clifton and saw Miss Cobbe, who might be truly described as very 'jolly.' I went to a five o'clock tea with her and met various people—an aged physician named Dr. Brabant who about thirty years ago gave up his practice to study Hebrew and became the friend of German Theologians; Miss Blagden, whom you probably know, an amiable lady who has written a novel and is the owner of a little white puppy wearing a scarlet coat; Dr. Goodeve an Indian Medical Officer; and various others." . . .

"February 2nd, 1862.

"Remember me to Miss Cobbe—I hope she gains from you sound notions on Political Economy. I shall always maintain that Philanthropy is intolerable when not based on sound ideas of Political Economy."

"June 4th, 1862.

"The articles in the *Daily News* I did not see. Were they Miss Cobbe's? I read her paper in Fraser in which the story of the Carnival was extremely well told." . . .

"March 15th, 1863.

"I write to thank you for Miss Cobbe's pamphlet, which I have read with great pleasure. I think her writing is always good and able. I have never seen Theodore Parker's works: he was, I imagine, a sort of hero and prophet; but I think I would rather have the Church of England large enough for us all with old memories and feelings, notwithstanding many difficulties and some iniquities, than new systems of Theism." . . .

"March 10th, 1864.

"Miss Cobbe has also kindly sent me a little book called *Broken Lights*, which appears to me to be extremely good. (I think the title is rather a mistake.) I dare say that you have read the book. The style is excellent, and the moderation and calmness with which the different parties are treated is beyond praise. The only adverse criticism that I should venture to make is that the latter part is too much narrowed to Theodore Parker's point of view, who was a great man, but too confident, I think, that the world could be held together by spiritual instincts."

And here are three charming letters from Mr. Jowett to me, one of them in reply to a letter from me from Rome, the others of a later date.

"Dear Miss Cobbe,

"I write to thank you for the Fraser which I received this morning and have read with great amusement and interest. I think that I should really feel happier living to see the end of the Pope, at least in his present mode of existence.

"I did indeed receive a most capital letter from you with a kind note from Miss Elliot. And 'I do remember me of

my faults this day.' The truth is that being very busy with Plato (do you know the intolerable burden of writing a fat book in two vols.?) I put off answering the letters until I was not quite certain whether the kind writers of them were still at Rome. I thought the Plato would have been out by this time, but this was only one of the numerous delusions in which authors indulge. The notes, however, are really finished, and the Essays will be done in a few months. I suspect you can read Greek, and shall therefore hope to send you a copy.

"I was always inclined to think well of the Romans from their defence of Rome in 1848, and their greatness and strength really does seem to show that they mean to be the centre of a great nation.

"Will you give my very kind regards to the Elliots? I should write to them if I knew exactly where: I hear that the Dean is transformed into a worshipper of the Virgin and of other pictures of the Saints.*

"Believe me, dear Miss Cobbe,

"Yours very truly,

"B. JOWETT.

"Bal. Coll., May 19th.

"Coll. de Bal., Oxon.

"Dear Miss Cobbe,

"I shall certainly read your paper on Political Economy. Political Economy seems to me in this imperfect world to be Humanity on a large scale (though not the whole of humanity). And I am always afraid of it being partially supplanted by humanity on the small scale, which relieves one-sixth of the poor whom we see, and pauperizes the mind of five-sixths whom we don't see.

"I won't trouble you with any more reflections on such an old subject. Remember me most kindly to the Dean and his daughters. I was going to send him a copy of the Articles against Dr. Williams. But upon second thoughts, I don't.

---

* Mr. Jowett referred to Dean Elliot's purchases of some fine old pictures.

It is such an ungracious, unsavoury matter. I hope that he won't give up the Prolocutorship, or that, if he does, he will state boldly his reasons for doing so. It is true that neither he nor anyone can do much good there. But the mere fact of a great position in the Church of England being held by a liberal clergyman is of great importance.

"I should have much liked to go to Rome this winter. But I am so entangled, first, with Plato, and, second, with the necessity of getting rid of Plato and writing something on Theology, that I do not feel justified in leaving my work. The vote of last Tuesday deferring indefinitely the endowment of my Professorship makes me feel that life is becoming a serious business to me. Not that I complain; the amount of sympathy and support which I have received has been enough to sustain anyone, if they needed it, (you should have seen an excellent squib written by a young undergraduate). But my friends are sanguine in imagining they will succeed hereafter. Next year it is true that they probably will get a small majority in Congregation. This, however, is of no use, as the other party will always bring up the country clergy in Convocation. I have, therefore, requested Dr. Stanley to take no further steps in the Council on the subject; it seems to me undignified to keep the University squabbling about my income.

"Excuse this long story which is partly suggested by your kind letter. I hope you will enjoy Rome. With sincere regard,

"Believe me, yours truly,

"B. JOWETT."

"Rev. Benjamin Jowett to Miss Cobbe.

"Coll. de Ball., Oxon.,

"February 24th, 1865.

"My Dear Miss Cobbe,

"I write to thank you for your very kind note. I am much more pleased at the rejoicings of my friends than at the result which has been so long delayed as to be almost

indifferent to me. I used to be annoyed at feeling that I was such a bad example to young men, because they saw, as they were intended to see, that unless they concealed their opinions they would suffer. I hope they will have more cheerful prospects now.

"I trust that some day I shall be able to write something more on Theology. But the Plato has proved an enormous work, having expanded into a sort of translation of the whole of the Dialogues. I believe this will be finished and printed about Christmas, but not before.

"I have been sorry to hear of your continued illness. When I come to London I shall hope to look in upon you in Hereford Square.

"In haste, believe me,

"Yours very truly,

"B. JOWETT."

"I read a book of Theodore Parker's the other day—'Discourses on Religion.' He was a friend of yours, I believe? I admire his character—a sort of religious Titan. But I thought his philosophy seemed to rest too much on instincts."

How much Mr. Jowett had to bear from the animosity of his orthodox contemporaries in the Sixties at Oxford was illustrated by the following incident. I was, one day about this time, showing his photograph to a lady, when her son, late from Oxford, came into the room with a dog at his heels. Seeing the photograph, he remarked, "Ah, yes! very like. *This dog* pinned him in quod one day, and was made so much of afterwards! The Dean of —— especially invited him" (the dog) "to lunch. Jowett complained of me, and I had to send all my dogs out of Oxford!"

The following is a Note which I made of two of his visits to me on Durdham Down:

"Two visits from Mr. Jowett, who each time drank tea with me. He said he felt writing to be a great labour; but

regularly wrote one page every day. The liberal, benevolent way he spoke of all creeds was delightful. In particular he spoke of the temptation to Pantheism and praised Hegel, who, he said, he had studied deeply. Advising me kindly to go on writing books, he maintained against me the vast power of books in the world."

Mr. Jowett was, of course, at all times a most interesting personality, and one whose intercourse was delightful and highly exciting to the intellect. But his excessive shyness, combined with his faculty for saying exceedingly sharp things, must have precluded, I should think, much ease of conversation between him and the majority of his friends. As usually happens in the case of shy people, he exhibited rather less of the characteristic with an acquaintance like myself who was never shy (my mother's training saved me from that affliction!) and who was not at all afraid of him.

In later years Mr. Jowett obtained for me (in 1876) the signatures of the Heads of every College in Oxford to a Petition which I had myself engrossed, to the House of Lords in favour of Lord Carnarvon's original Bill for the restriction of Vivisection. At a later date the Master of Balliol declined to support me further in the agitation for the prohibition of the practice; referring me to the assurances of a certain eminent Boanerges of Science as guarantee for the necessity of the practice and the humanity of vivisectors. It is very surprising to me how good and strong men, who would disdain to accept a *religious* principle or dogma from Pope or Council, will take a *moral* one without hesitation from any doctor or professor of science who may lay down the law for them, and present the facts so as to make the scale turn his way. Where would Protestant divines be, if they squared their theologies with all the historical statements and legends of Romanism? If we construct our ethical judgments upon the statements and

representations of persons interested in maintaining a practice, what chance is there that they should be sound?

I find, in a letter to a friend (dated May, 1868) the following *souvenir* of a sermon by Mr. Jowett, delivered in a church near Soho :—

"We went to that sermon on Sunday. It was really very fine and very bold; much better than the report in the *Pall Mall Gazette* made it. Mr. Albert D—— was there, but few else who looked as if they could understand him. He has a good voice and delivery, and the "cherubic" countenance and appealing eyes suit the pulpit; but he *looks at one* as I never knew any preacher do. We sat close to him, and it was as if we were in a drawing-room. M. says that all the first part was taken from my *Broken Lights;* that is,—it was a sketch of existing opinions on the same plan. It was good when he said:

"The High church watchword is: *The Church; always and ever the same.*

"The Low church watchword is: *The Bible only the Religion of Protestants.*

"The party of Knowledge has for its principle: '*The Truth ever and always, and wherever it be found.*'

"He gave each their share of praise and blame, saying: 'the fault of the last party' (his own, of course) was that 'sometimes in the pursuit of *Knowledge* they forgot *Goodness.*'"

I heard him preach more than once afterwards in the same gloomy old church. His aspect in his surplice was exceedingly quaint: His face, even in old age, was like that of an innocent, round-faced child; and his short, slender figure, wrapped in the long white garment, irresistibly suggested to me the idea of "an elderly cherub prepared for bed"! Altogether, taking into account his entire career, the Master of Balliol was an unique figure in English life, whom I much rejoice to have known; a modern Melchisedek.

Here is another memorandum about the same date, respecting another eminent man, interesting in another way:—

"Sept. 25th, 1860. A pleasant evening at Canon Guthrie's. Introduced to old Lord Lansdowne; a gentle, courteous old man with deep-set, faded grey eyes, and heavy eyebrows; a blue coat and *brass buttons!* In the course of the evening I was carrying on war in a corner of the room against the Dean of Bristol, Mr. C—— and Margaret Elliot, about Toryism. I argued that if *Justice to all* were the chief end of Government, the power should be lodged in the hands of the class who *best understood justice;* and that the consequence of the opposite course was manifest in America, where the freest government which had ever existed, supported also the most gigantic of all wrongs—Slavery. On this Countess Rothkirch who sat by, clapped her hands with joy; and the Dean came down on me saying, "That if power should only be given to those who would use it justly, then the Tories should never have any power at all; for they *never* used it justly." Hearing the laughter at my discomfiture, Lord Lansdowne toddled across the room and sat down beside me saying: 'What is it all about?' I cried: 'Oh Lord Lansdowne! you are the very person in the whole world to help me— *I am defending Tory principles*'! He laughed heartily, and said 'I am afraid I can hardly do that.' 'Oh, yes,' I said, 'you may be converted at the eleventh hour!' 'Don't you know,' he said, 'what a child asked her mother: "Are Tories *born* wicked, mother, or do they only become so?"' Margaret said this was really asked by a cousin of her own, one of the Adam family. It ended in much laughter and talking about '*Transformation*,' and the '*Semi-attached Couple*'—which Lord Lansdowne said he was just reading. 'I like novels very much,' he said, 'only I take a little time between each of them.' When I got up to go away the kind old man rose in the most courtly way to shake hands, and paid me a little old-world compliment."

This was the eloquent statesman and patron of literature, Henry, third Marquis of Lansdowne, in whose time his house, (Bowood,) was the resort of the finest intellectual society of England. I have a droll letter in my possession referring to this Bowood society, by Sydney Smith, written to Mrs. Kemble, then Mrs. Butler. It has come to me with all her other papers and with seven letters from Lord Lansdowne pressing her to pay him visits. Sydney Smith writes on his invitation to her to come to Combe Fleury; after minute directions about the route:—

"The interval between breakfast and dinner brings you to Combe Fleury. We are the next stage (to Bowood). Lord Lansdowne's guests commonly come here *dilated and disordered* with high living."

In another letter conveying a similar invitation he says, with his usual bitterness and injustice as regards America:

"Be brave my dear lady. Hoist the American flag. Barbarise your manners. *Dissyntax* your language. Fling a thick mantle over your lively spirits, and become the fust of American women. You will always remain a bright vision in my recollection. Do not forget me. Call me Butler's Hudibras. Any appellation provided I am not forgotten."

Among the residents in Clifton and at Stoke Bishop over the Downs I had many kind friends, some of whom helped me essentially in my work by placing tickets for hospitals and money in my hands for the poor. One of these whom I specially recall with gratitude was that ever zealous moral reformer, Mrs. Woolcott Browne, who is still working bravely with her daughter for many good causes in London. I must not write here without permission of the many others whose names have not come before the public, but whose affectionate consideration made my life very pleasant, and whom I ever

remember with tender regard. Of one excellent couple I may venture to speak,—Dr. and Mrs. Goodeve of Cook's Folly. Mrs. Goodeve herself told me their singular and beautiful story, and since she and her husband are now both dead, I think I may allow myself to repeat it.

Dr. Goodeve was a young medical man who had just married, and was going out to seek his fortune in India, having no prospects in England. As part of their honeymoon holiday the young couple went to visit Cook's Folly; then a small, half-ruinous, castellated building, standing in a spot of extraordinary beauty over the Avon, looking down the Bristol Channel. As they were descending the turret-stair and taking, as they thought, a last look on the loveliness of England, the young wife perceived that her husband's head was bent down in deep depression. She laid her hand on his shoulder and whispered "Never mind, Harry! You shall make a fortune in India and we will come back and buy Cook's Folly."

They went to Calcutta and were there most kindly received by a gentleman named Hurry, who edited a newspaper and whose own history had been strange and tragic. Started in his profession by his interest, Dr. Goodeve soon fell into good practice, and by degrees became a very successful physician, the founder (I believe) of the existing Medical College of Calcutta. Going on a shooting party, his face was most terribly shattered by a chance shot which threatened to prove mortal, but Mrs. Goodeve, without help or appliances, alone with him in a tent in a wild district, pulled him back to life. At last they returned to England, wealthy and respected by all, and bringing a splendid collection of Indian furniture and *curios*. The very week they landed, Cook's Folly was advertised to be sold! They remembered it well,—went to see it,—bought it—and rebuilded it; making it a most charming and beautiful

house. A peculiarity of its structure as remodelled by them was, that there was an entire suite of rooms,—a large library overlooking the river Avon, bedroom, bath-room and servant's room,—all capable of being shut off from the rest of the house, by double doors, so that the occupant might be quite undisturbed. When everything was finished, and splendidly furnished, the Goodeves wrote to Mr. Hurry: "It is time for you to give up your paper and come home. You acted a father's part to us when we went out first to India. Now come to us, and live as with your son and daughter."

Mr. Hurry accepted the invitation and found waiting for him and his Indian servant the beautiful suite of rooms built for him, and the tenderest welcome. I saw him often seated by their fire-side just as a father might have been. When the time came for him to die, Mrs. Goodeve nursed him with such devoted care, and strained herself so much in lifting and helping him, that her own health was irretrievably injured, and she died not long afterwards..

I could write more of Bristol and Clifton friends, high and low, but must draw this chapter of my life to a close. I went to Bristol an utter stranger, knowing no human being there. I left it after a few years all peopled, as it seemed to me, with kind souls; and without one single remembrance of anything else but kindness received there either from gentle or simple.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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